The Dissertation Committee for Miryam Hazan Certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Incorporating in the United States and Mexico: Mexican Immigrant Mobilization and Organization in Four American Cities

Committee:

Gary P. Freeman, Supervisor

Rodolfo O. de la Garza, Supervisor

Alan E. Kessler

Catherine Boone

Bryan R. Roberts

`

Incorporating in the United States and Mexico: Mexican Immigrant Mobilization and Organization in Four American Cities

by

Miryam Hazan, B.A.; M.A.

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

August 2006

Acknowledgements

This project would not have been possible without the help of many people. First I want to acknowledge my two dissertation advisors: Gary Freeman at the University of Texas at Austin and Rodolfo de la Garza at Columbia University. I have benefited and learned a lot from both of them. Rudy initiated me into the topic of international migration and opened my mind to the study of the political aspects of Mexican migration. Through the Public Policy Clinic at the University of Texas at Austin and the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute he helped finance my dissertation research. Gary introduced me to the literature on political opportunity structures and to European research on immigrant political incorporation, which greatly enriched my study. He helped me in the design of the project and read my chapters and other writings innumerable times, encouraging me to continue during the most difficult moments of the dissertation writing. Without his help, this project would have probably never arrived to completion.

I also want to thank the other members of my dissertation committee, Alan Kessler, Bryan Roberts, and Cathy Boone, for their useful feedback on my dissertation work. Professor Boone also gave me useful advice for my doctoral career, for which I am grateful.

At different points in my work I also received valuable suggestions from professors Daniel Tichenor, James Hollifield, and Aristide Zolberg. Special thanks to

Professor Zolberg who allowed me to audit his course on International Migration at the New School for Social Research in New York City. I also benefited from the feedback of many of the participants in the 2004 Summer School on International Migration organized by the Social Science Research Council and the Sociology Department of the University of California, Los Angeles.

I feel grateful to all the people that gave me their time and shared with me their experiences during my research in Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York. The information and stories they provided me are the basis of this project. During my research I was impressed by the strong commitment that many leaders have shown in helping improve the life conditions of their places of origin as well as the local Mexican community in the cities I visited. By talking to them I realized how important their voluntary work has been in helping to increase the social and political capitals of the first generation Mexican immigrant community in the United States. Many of the persons whom I met during my fieldwork also became good friends. Among others, Tereso Ortiz, Francisco Garci Dueñas, Guadalupe Gómez, Salvador Beltrán del Rio, Raúl Ross, Carlos Olamendi, Dante Gómez, Florencio Zaragoza, Miguel Moctezuma, Jacobo Kuperstock, Irma and Jeffrey Shaw, and Manuel Solano. With Irma and Manuel, I also shared many adventures that deepened my understanding of the immigrant community.

While I was living in Austin I met some of my best friends who have been a continuous source of intellectual stimulus and whose advice has been fundamental for my academic endeavor, including Jonathan Bloch, Fujia Lu, Jose Luis Benavides and Shannan Mattiace. In New Jersey I also want to thank my friends Linda Sturla, Aparna Cherukuri, and Lauren and Peter Gelman, and in Mexico my friends Jorge Volpi, Magda

Olivia Gonzalez, Noemi Bejar, my aunts Sara and Estela Hazán and my mother in law Reyna Babani for accompanying me during different stages of my journey and for listening to my many stories about my dissertation.

I also want to thank my parents Jacobo Hazán and Luisa Béjar and my brother Leonardo for their unconditional support and encouragement. From a very young age my mother taught me to love the study of politics. The fact that she was able to pursue an academic career in political science while raising her children showed me that I could do the same.

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to my husband and companion Mauricio Dantus, the person I treasure the most in my life. He has encouraged me without hesitation at all times. He suffered through this dissertation as much as I did during the time I felt I was not advancing, and he enjoyed it as much as I when a new idea that tied everything together fell into place. And to my two boys, Jacobo and Joshua, who are a constant source of happiness and inspiration.

Incorporating in the United States and Mexico: Mexican Immigrant Mobilization and Organization in Four American Cities

Publication No._____

Miryam Hazan, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2006

Supervisors: Gary P. Freeman and Rodolfo O. de la Garza

This work analyzes the political incorporation of Mexican immigrants into both their home and host countries through the examination of the origins, dynamics and patterns of action of first-generation Mexican-American organizations in four American cities: Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Dallas. Political incorporation has traditionally implied that immigrants abandon their political interests in their country of origin. Because immigrant political incorporation is often tightly linked to and influenced by incorporation or reincorporation into the homeland, these two processes should be studied together. The work presented is based on a large and unique data set based on extensive fieldwork and numerous interviews in the four cities. Among the major findings are: (1) Mexican organizations in the four cities were created from the 1990s onwards in reaction to conditions and incentives in both the United States and Mexico, casting doubt on transnational approaches that attribute the emergence of these organizations to technological developments and other similar factors; (2) convergence in the types of organizations Mexicans have established is explained by explicit home

country policies oriented towards mobilizing and organizing them, while variations are explained by immigrants' interactions with the structures of opportunity they have encountered in the cities where they have settled; and (3) mobilization towards Mexico has had a positive effect on domestic mobilization as well, challenging the view that reestablishing ties to their homeland diminishes immigrant's interest in their host country. However, homeland mobilization may have the negative effect of dividing immigrants along Mexican party lines.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Political Incorporation of Mexican Immigrants in the United States and Mexico

Because of their large and growing numbers, the political behavior of Mexican migrants is of mounting importance to the future of both the American and Mexican political systems. Mexicans are the largest immigrant group in the United States. According to the US Census, in 2004 the Hispanic population in the United States was 40.4 million (14% of the U.S. population). Of those, 26.6 million (9.2% of the U.S. population) were of Mexican origin and approximately 10.6 million were born in Mexico (Census 2005). The Mexican immigrant population in the United States has grown so fast in the last 20 years that it accounts for 37.8% of the total increase in the number of immigrants living in the Unites States (ICEMC 2001).

Mexicans in the United States can potentially affect local and national electoral processes, particularly taking into account that their naturalization rates have been on the rise (Johnston 2001; Barreto and Woods 2005). Data presented by the National Council of La Raza (Raza 2002) suggest that between 1990 and 2000 the number of states in which Hispanics made up 5% or more of voting citizens increased from 15 to 23 (Guzmán 2001). In addition, states in which the Mexican immigrant population represents the largest immigrant group (California) or states that have seen a triple digit

increase within the same period (Texas, Pennsylvania, Florida, Illinois, New York) also account for the most electoral votes (more than 20 each).

Mexicans have been at the center of immigration debates in the United States in the last two decades. Some commentators claim, for example, that Mexican immigration reduces wages for the poorest American workers without generating significant benefits to the United States economy[1]. Others have argued that Mexican immigration departs from traditional patterns of integration into American society, directly raising "basic questions about issues of cultural coherence and attachment in American politics" (Renshon 2001, p. 36; Huntington 2004b; Huntington 2004a). While these claims are debatable, the reality is that many political commentators and analysts who shape American public opinion consider the social and political incorporation of Mexican immigrants a serious issue that is up for grabs.

The political behavior of Mexican immigrants is important not only for the United States, however. Mexico itself is undergoing a process of democratic consolidation with the end of a long period of one-party dominance. This fact, along with Mexico's recent decision to cultivate its relationship with its emigrants in the United States, the 1996 dual nationality law, and the 2005 law that allows expatriates to vote in presidential elections, has not only expanded the opportunities for Mexicans living abroad to participate in Mexican politics but has legitimized their participation. The impact of expatriates on Mexico's politics is growing because of simple demographics. Data presented by the Mexican government shows that of the 2,443 municipalities in Mexico only 93 are not producing emigrants to the United States[2]. This means that emigrant political influence

[1] See, for example, Borjas(2001) and Camarota (2001)
[2] Source: Consejo Nacional de Población (Gómez Guzmán 2003)

will spread not only in states that have traditionally produced emigration, but in other regions as well.

In the last two decades émigrés have started to play an increasingly significant role in Mexico's political and economic life. They not only helped determine electoral outcomes at the local and state levels by influencing the decisions of voters from their communities of origin, but they also became one of the prime sources of foreign income for the Mexican economy through the remittances they send back. Today, however, they may also be in the position of deciding the election of Mexico's future presidents because even if they end up not voting in large numbers electoral processes in Mexico have become so volatile and competitive among the three largest parties that a relative small number of votes coming from abroad may determine the outcome[3]. For these reasons, they have become an important political constituency in their homeland, one that political parties are starting to cultivate assiduously. As they become more organized and mobilized, their influence and political leverage over the home country will certainly augment.

1.2 The Problem

This study explores the processes of political incorporation of Mexican immigrants into both the United States and Mexico. Political incorporation traditionally is taken to mean the process by which migrants and their children settle and are absorbed into the polities of their host societies[4]. Never a good description of reality, it is even less

[3] For example, in the 2006 Presidential elections the total number of votes from abroad was 33,111 (32,620 counted). This is apparently as a low number. However, the potential impact of this new electorate can be seen when considering that the difference between the top two candidates Felipe Calderón from the PAN and Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador from the PRD was only 243,934 votes.

[4] The notion of political incorporation used in this work is different from the wider notion of incorporation or assimilation into the host society. The notion of political incorporation does not have any cultural, ideological, economic, or social connotations. While it is expected that immigrants should be absorbed into

so today. Contemporary migration is not always permanent and given prevailing technology and communications may become less so. This is especially true with Mexican immigrants to the United States both because Mexico is contiguous and because such a great proportion of Mexican immigrants are undocumented, a status that hinders their chances of being fully absorbed into the host polity. Nonetheless, the traditional ways of studying incorporation are still useful. We need to know when and how migrants turn their attention to the United States political system, acquire legal or permanent status, naturalize and begin to participate. Rather than involving only absorption, however, the process of incorporation should be understood as a constant negotiation between newcomers and their hosts, which involves potentially major changes in the political system of the receiving country and thus the opening up of new spaces for immigrant political participation.

This study also explores the incorporation of the emigrant population into the Mexican political system. Many Mexican migrants can hardly be said to have been incorporated into that system before departing for the United States, particularly considering that the majority were drawn from poorly educated and politically and socially marginal sectors of Mexican society. Others were full citizens but may have drifted away; and still others remain deeply identified with Mexico but have not been free

---

their host polity, this absorption does not imply major identity changes or the abandoning of their ties with their places and countries of origin. Full absorption here only implies full representation in the political and policy processes of the receiving country. In operational terms, political incorporation includes indicators such as immigrant regularization, naturalization, voter registration, voting, joining political organizations, developing partisan affiliations, participating in political campaigns, running for office, developing political advocacy skills and similar ones. Although all this information is relevant for my work, I do not systematically collect all this evidence at the individual level, because as I will explain latter, this work studies the process of incorporation through the dynamics and interactions of immigrant organizations with the home and host polities.

to participate from abroad in the past. Accordingly, some emigrants are incorporating for the first time, others are reincorporating, and still others are now in a position to exercise rights more fully.

The outcome of the process of political incorporation into the receiving polity can take various forms. A full process of incorporation ideally supposes that immigrants have a substantive influence or control over the policy process on those issues that are particularly relevant for them (Browning, et al. 1990b). Nonetheless, most forms of incorporation are partial, can vary across states and cities, and do not always imply the need of having citizenship rights in the host society, although their possession increases the prospects for immigrants to have meaningful influence. Undocumented immigrants, for example, can participate in rallies and demonstrations to demand better working conditions and legal status. In contrast, those migrants who are citizens do not necessarily vote but still have influence because the host country political parties either want or fear that they will register to do so.

Following the work of Browning, Marshall, et al. (1990b) on minority incorporation in American cities, it is possible to identify two roads that immigrants can follow towards incorporation: electoral and interest group. These roads are not necessarily alternatives but can rather be used simultaneously, although the electoral strategy requires access to citizenship rights. An electoral strategy seeks to influence the political system from the inside. It requires immigrants to register to vote. Voting alone, however, would not be enough. They will also need to have members of their group achieve political and administrative positions. Also, it is essential for them to establish alliances with other ethnic groups, as well as with groups within the mainstream society,

and to play “an equal or leading role in a dominant coalition strongly committed to minority interests” (Browning, et al. 1990b, p. 9). The interest group strategy seeks to influence the political system from the outside. This requires immigrants to produce substantial demands and protest to generate a reaction from the dominant coalition in government. If there is not at least a partial incorporation of immigrants into their receiving country, they will remain an unprotected group, potentially the source of social and political conflict.

The political incorporation of emigrants into their homeland is much less obvious and poses theoretical and empirical questions about nation, state, and democracy. Ideally, full incorporation implies that emigrants have a substantive influence or control over the policy process on those issues relevant to them. However, most forms of incorporation are partial, do not necessarily imply access to full citizenship rights (specifically political rights), and can vary across different states and localities within the homeland. The first step towards incorporation would require recognition by the sending society that expatriates are legitimate actors who can positively affect economic, social and political development. Emigrants then can influence their polity of origin following the same two roads adumbrated above. An electoral strategy requires the granting of full citizenship rights by their homeland, including the right to vote and/or be elected to political office from abroad. Rights will be realized only through mobilization and action. Expatriates will need for some of their members to obtain elected or appointive offices and build alliances with other groups in their sending country. When they have not been granted political rights in their homeland, emigrants have attempted to impact the electoral

process by influencing the votes of their family members they left behind, but this is obviously a less potent tactic.

Emigrants can also incorporate into their homeland polity by following an interest-group strategy. It is important to clarify that emigrants rarely mobilize *en masse*, although political events with great significance such as regime changes might spark such responses[5]. Also, emigrants can be mobilized by homeland governments that facilitate their organization. Once they are mobilized towards their homeland, the home country confronts some risks if it does not at least partially incorporate emigrants into the polity. When emigrants are a large group, their lack of incorporation can become a source of social and political conflict for the homeland. This scenario, however, is uncommon because it requires collective action on the part of emigrants that is difficult to achieve. One important resource emigrants control is the flow of remittances, which might be withheld if emigrants become alienated from the homeland.

In the last few decades, incorporation into both host and home polity has become more feasible than ever as many sending countries now promote dual citizenship or dual nationality policies and receiving countries have been relaxing their citizenship and naturalization requirements at the same time that they have become more tolerant of dual citizenship or multiple nationality practices. This contrasts with the traditional view that

[5] It is also not clear the extent to which they mobilize to vote in their homeland elections once they have that right. The evidence suggests that only a few emigrants that have been allowed to vote in their country of origin actually vote. Colombia, for example, has allowed its citizens to vote from abroad since 1962. The percentages of those voting, however, are small. For example, of an estimated population of three million people residing abroad in 1998 fewer than 200,000 registered to vote in the presidential elections of that year and only 44 thousand actually voted in the first round of the elections. For the second round fewer than 30,000 voted. In the Mexican case, a study prior to the approval of the right to vote by mail from abroad in presidential elections suggested that only a small percentage of expatriates would vote (Cornelius and A. 2003). This was confirmed by the 2006 presidential election data where of an estimated universe of 4 million potential voters, only 56,749 registered to vote, of those 81% ended up participating. Nonetheless, since this was the first time Mexicans residing abroad were eligible to vote, it is difficult to know if this low level of participation will continue.

sees incorporation as a zero-sum situation in which the immigrant has to choose between his adopted polity and his country of origin. In a world in which more people have acquired rights to exercise influence in two polities simultaneously, this zero sum dilemma seems no longer applicable.

This study traces the incorporation of Mexican migrants into the United States and Mexico through an examination of the policies of the two national states and of the behavior of immigrant political associations. After tracing the evolution of the US and Mexican government policies vis-à-vis the Mexican diaspora, I turn to the political activities of the diaspora itself. I explore the origins and dynamics of organizations for first-generation Mexican immigrants that have emerged in the last two decades in four American cities with large Mexican populations: Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York. I argue that these organizations are at once a forum for the mobilization and socialization of recent immigrants and potential lobbies vis-à-vis both Mexico and the United States.

As Rosenhek (1999) has suggested, migrant organizations and associations are pivotal actors in the process of political incorporation in the host country. Although the majority of migrants are not likely to participate extensively in any of these organizations (Desipio, et al. 2003), they "can function as a major institutional resource, allowing migrants to engage in a politics of claims-making aimed at the improvement of their legal, political and socioeconomic status"(Rosenhek 1999, p. 575). These associations augment the social capital of newcomers, which in turn increases their levels of political trust and participation both through formal and informal means (Jacobs and Tillie 2004).

A number of recent studies analyze the role and activities of immigrant associations in shaping the patterns of incorporation of specific immigrant groups (Ireland 1994; Feldblum 1999; Rosenhek 1999; Bousetta 2000; Ireland 2000; Koopmans and Statham 2000a; Ireland 2003; Ogelman 2003; Berger, et al. 2004; Fennema 2004; Jacobs, et al. 2004; Jacobs and Tillie 2004; Koopmans 2004; Odmalm 2004; Tillie 2004; Togeby 2004). Most of these studies offer an instrumental explanation and present immigrant mobilization as driven by structural disadvantage and political opportunities and constraints. They thus generally use a neo-institutional explanatory framework derived from political sociology to evaluate the degree to which different host state institutions (e.g. citizenship regimes, national integration policies, party and electoral systems, framing discourses about who belongs to the nation, welfare and sub-national institutions) affect immigrant mobilization, association and incorporation (Ireland 1994; Freeman and Ogelman 1998; Ireland 2000; Koopmans and Statham 2000b; Ireland 2003; Koopmans 2004). In some cases they combine this type of explanation with one focused on the adaptation side and assess the level of social capital created by these organizations and its effects on the levels of political trust and, thus, of participation and incorporation of newcomers into their host polity (Jacobs, et al. 2004). Finally some of these studies focus predominantly on adaptation (Tillie 2004).

I follow an institutional approach although I also pay attention to adaptation by evaluating the strength of first-generation immigrant organizations and their capacity to influence political developments in their home and host countries. Consistent with the authors who have emphasized opportunity structures, I focus on host state institutions and institutional practices, but I also keep in mind those of the home state. Together they

create a structure of opportunities and constraints that affects the chances of immigrant associations being established and the modes of political action that they pursue. Also, these institutions and institutional practices play a fundamental role in determining the extent and the manner in which migrants will incorporate into the polities of their home and host states.

The effect of these institutional practices, however, is not as straightforward as it may at first seem. Greater engagement by homeland governments in affecting immigrant organizational practices does not necessarily predict that immigrants incorporate more in their home country than in their host society. Depending on the institutional context of the host country, the mobilization of immigrants by home countries may also motivate them to incorporate in their host country. This contradicts widely held assumptions that greater interest in the homeland diminishes immigrants' desire to incorporate into the host country[6]. For instance, a recent survey (Desipio, et al. 2003) demonstrates that those individuals who tend to be engaged in some way or another in their homeland politics are also more likely to be engaged in their host country politics. This, however, depends on the structures of opportunity and constraint created by the policies of both sending and receiving countries towards migrants.

1.3 The Role of Host State Institutions

Dismissing class and ethnic models to explain immigrant political activities, Ireland (1994; 2000; 2003) develops an institutional channeling framework. He argues that host society institutional structures determine the ways in which immigrant claims will be organized. Ireland highlights immigration, citizenship, and naturalization laws, as

[6] Although the involvement of expatriates on their homeland's politics might diminish their capacity to create a cohesive front towards the host country (Ogelman 2003)

well as interactions between immigrants and institutional gatekeepers who control access to political participation. These institutional gatekeepers include political parties, trade unions, and religious and humanitarian non-profit associations "that can weaken or strengthen the effects of differences in resources" (Ireland 2000, p. 36) for immigrants. In addition, specific policies affect the political participation of immigrants, including education, housing, social assistance, and labor market policies. All these host country institutions and practices strengthen or weaken the racial, ethnic and class identities of immigrants. Institutions are not neutral, but help determine whether immigrants' participation will take on a class or ethnic orientation.

From this point of view, class or ethnic forms of political participation become dependent variables that are clearly affected by the institutional practices of the host society. The evidence I present supports this view. In particular, the data I gathered show that not all Mexican immigrants organize in the same ways. Different cities produce different patterns of organization and even similar forms of organization of first-generation Mexican immigrants exhibit different dynamics and agendas that cannot be explained by class or ethnic factors alone.

Ireland's analysis also suggests that the institutional channels opened by the host state will affect immigrants' organizational ties to their homeland. For example, in his 1994 study, which compared immigrant political participation in two cities in France and two cities in Switzerland, Ireland showed that in La Corneuve, one of the French cities, the local communist authorities strengthened a class-based and a homeland-oriented form of immigrants' participation. They emphasized the internationalist and worldwide class unity of immigrants and advocated full social and trade union rights. They did not,

however, favor granting voting rights at the local level because doing so might affect their "right to be different" and to exercise their civic rights in their homelands (Ireland 1994, p.110). In addition, the local authorities in that city stifled opposition to those homeland governments that were unfriendly to the French Communist Party.

In his more recent work, Ireland (2003) identifies the welfare state as a key variable affecting the form of immigrant political participation. He suggests that some institutional practices, specifically those that involve social policy retrenchment, have intensified ethnic conflicts and ethnic identities in Western societies and have increased the "homeland hangover" of some immigrant groups. "As an incarnation and guarantor of social citizenship," welfare state institutions "have had a powerful say in whether the forces of exclusion or inclusion prevail" (Ireland 2003, p. 9). For years, social policies, even in liberal Anglo-Saxon countries, helped to attenuate the inequalities created by the market and to ensure the integration of all segments of the population, including immigrants. Decentralization, privatization and delegation of social assistance to non-profit organizations, nonetheless, have stimulated ethnic-identity cleavages and motivated greater mobilization towards the homeland. No matter how you look at the data, "the association between disadvantage and minority status has hardened" in Europe and the United States:

> In its at-risk neighborhoods, Europe has at-risk population groups. Those of immigrant origin belong to them disproportionately, promoting fears that ethnicity has become a major axis of social exclusion (Ireland 2003, p. 8).

I follow Ireland in stressing the relevance of host institutions and institutional practices to the emergence, dynamics, and orientation of immigrant organizations.

Ireland's work suggests that if the channels for political participation are more open to immigrants in their host country at the national and local level, and if they have more chances to obtain socioeconomic status equal to that of the mainstream society, thanks in part to effective social assistance policies, they will have fewer incentives to link their political agendas to their homelands. However, this situation can be altered under two conditions: (1) if they have little encouragement or access to participate in the host society political and economic life and (2) if they are mobilized by political events back home or by policies implemented by homeland governments that attempt to influence their political attitudes. This means that homeland states play an active part in increasing or decreasing immigrants' interest in their country of origin. For this reason, I investigate the role played by policies of the sending as well as the host country.

My research produces extensive evidence that changes in naturalization and citizenship laws in the United States, together with a new policy of rapprochement with migrants implemented by the Mexican government in the last two decades, have stimulated the flourishing of organizations for first-generation immigrants in the four cities I studied. The research also shows that the limited channels for political participation in the United States, in conjunction with the opportunities that have opened for them in the political and economic lives of their communities and country of origin, have impelled immigrant associations to articulate a political agenda more tied to the homeland than to that of the host. Despite that, Mexico's institutional practices towards its émigrés have also facilitated more sophisticated forms of organization of first-generation immigrants in the United States than those that had previously been developed. The immigrant turn towards the homeland has opened new channels of

participation in their host country because this mobilization has given them a political consciousness they did not have before and helped them develop a complex organizational network that they are starting to use to advance their interests in the United States. Nonetheless, the strong influence that Mexico's politics have had on Mexican organizations in the United States has also created divisions within the first-generation Mexican community that may limit their chances of creating a coherent political front in the United States.

Ireland argues that variations in the political forms of participation of immigrants in different national and local settings are determined by the political opportunities and constraints created by institutional practices of the host state. My study does not compare the political participation of Mexicans in different national settings, because it is limited to the United States. However, in a country like the United States, where local governments control many aspects of public policy, the four cities I study should provide sufficient variation to test differences across institutional settings. With this caveat, I hypothesize that immigrants' interactions with host institutions determine their various organizational dynamics and patterns of political incorporation in their host country. However, these organizational dynamics and patterns are also affected by the links immigrants establish with institutions in their homeland. I suggest that, controlling for class and ethnic factors, the differences in the organizational strategies that Mexican immigrants have adopted in the four cities are determined by the specific interactions immigrants have with the institutional setting of those cities as well as by their interactions with various homeland institutional actors, including local consulates, the governments of the states and communities of origin, the national Congress, the political

parties and the executive branch. In addition, I suggest that a convergence is emerging in the type of organizations Mexicans have been developing in the United States and in their general stance towards their host and home countries that is explained in great part by the explicit policies and mobilization efforts of the Mexican state in the last couple of decades.

From my point of view, the current process of political incorporation of Mexicans in the United States has been clearly intertwined with their process of incorporation and re-incorporation in Mexico. American amnesty policies such as the 1986 IRCA radically changed the identification of many Mexicans from sojourners to immigrants[7] (Fuchs 1990). For the first time a huge sector of the first-generation Mexican population in the United States had access to citizenship, and could become full members of the American polity. Recent immigration and naturalization policies implemented by the United States were almost coincidental with radical changes in Mexico's attitude and policies towards its emigrants which culminated in the 2005 law that enfranchised Mexican expatriates.

For these reasons I maintain that we need to study the process of incorporation of the Mexican diaspora into the United States and the Mexican polity simultaneously. It is almost impossible to thoroughly understand one of them without understanding the other.

1.4 Incorporating in the Home Country

The incorporation of emigrants into their homeland politics has been much less studied than their incorporation into the host country. In a recent study Morawska (2001) demonstrates that since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sending countries have actively mobilized, organized, and incorporated emigrants into their nation-building

[7] The 1965 Immigration Act, which established family reunification as a major immigration policy and thereby allowed legal Mexican immigrants to bring their family members also facilitated the settlement process.

processes and in some cases tried to repress political activities deemed subversive. Eastern and southern European countries such as Poland and Italy attempted to influence their emigrants in the United States. Emigrants played an active role in preserving homeland ties by attempting to keep informed about and influence political developments there. Morawska's literature review, however, shows that these phenomena produced only scattered studies that have been for the most part forgotten.

The more recent literature on transnationalism has helped fill this gap. As Glick Schiller (1999) points out, transnational studies, particularly those that focus on international migration, seek to identify the political, economic, social and cultural ties that migrants maintain and construct beyond the borders of a particular state. These studies, therefore, extensively document the social and political connections that emigrants have nurtured of late with their homelands and particularly with their local communities of origin (Goldring; Smith 1997a; Goldring 1998b; Goldring 1998a; Smith and Guarnizo 1998b; Smith 1998a; Smith 1998b; Itzigsohn, et al. 1999; Landolt, et al. 1999; Moctezuma Longoria 1999; Smith 1999b; Itzigsohn 2000; Unger 2000; Portes, et al. 2002; Moctezuma Longoria 2003; Smith 2003). Scholars of this school argue that even though previous generations of immigrants often maintained close ties to their homeland, new developments in technology and communications, as well as increasing economic and political interdependence, facilitate and encourage migrants' transnational activities.

Most of this literature, however, focuses exclusively on individual-level variables[8] (Portes, et al. 1999) and thus misses or diminishes the key role sending and receiving states have been playing in shaping the transnational activities of migrants. One reason is that in some of the predominant transnational literature, particularly that derived from cultural studies, the state is thought of as disappearing or becoming irrelevant (Appadurai 1990; Bhabha 1990; Basch, et al. 1994; Clifford 1994; Appadurai 1996). Other studies coming from sociology and anthropology are less conclusive in their assessments of the fate of the state, but treat it, nonetheless, as peripheral. More recent attempts to address this limitation aim to specify the role that sending states play in structuring immigrant organizations (Guarnizo 1998; Smith 1998a; Itzigsohn, et al. 1999; Smith 1999b; Itzigsohn 2000; Guarnizo 2001; Goldring 2002; Smith 2003).

Itzigsohn's (2000) work is particularly pertinent. First, it refers to the sending state as a key actor in determining immigrant activities directed at their homeland. Second, along with others (De la Garza 1997; Smith 1998a; Calderon Chelius and Martinez Saldaña 2002), it links two homeland institutions to the activities of immigrant organizations in the receiving countries: the administrative apparatus of the state and the party system. Itzigsohn argues that certain home state policies aimed at engaging emigrants, along with a competitive party system, open opportunities for emigrants to participate in their motherland political process. Sending states have a strong interest in guaranteeing the continuous flow of remittances and involving emigrants in the economic development of their country of origin. For this reason they have opened up new avenues

[8] Transnational studies in the last decade represent a reaction to structural theories in international migration that were not able to explain why immigrants who appear to be the victims of overwhelming structural forces have been able to develop special links with their communities of origin that liberate them from their condition of subordination. For this reason, they argue that individuals (migrants) construct their own destiny (Smith and Guarnizo 1998b; Roberts 1999).

for emigrant participation in the economic and political life of their homeland. The effectiveness of this involvement, however, is shaped by the strength of migrant organizations in host societies: the greater their strength, the larger the influence they will have in their homeland, thus creating a distinctive transnational political space. This transnational space can emerge when there is a disjuncture between politics and territory, that is, when there is an expansion of the geographical scope of action of sending states, and when there are strong immigrant associations that can take advantage of the political opportunities created by the transnational activities of sending states targeted to their populations abroad. Among other things, migrant organizations may demand a wider voice in the political and policy processes of their country of origin. This may then be translated into increasing demands for citizenship rights in the country of origin that are not linked to territory and residency

Along with Itzigsohn, I stress the relevance of the regime type and the dynamics of the party system of the homeland as affecting emigrant organization and mobilization towards their country of origin. Authoritarian, totalitarian or sultanistic regimes (Linz and Stepan 1996) would certainly offer fewer incentives for emigrants to organize and mobilize towards their homeland[9]. Emigrants, nonetheless, may organize autonomously to oppose the political regime of their homeland in the way that Cubans in the United States have opposed Fidel Castro's authoritarian regime. Countries that actively engage emigrants and facilitate at least their partial incorporation through dual nationality or dual citizenship policies tend to be going through democratization, or already have a democratic regime. The dynamics of the party system also affect emigrant incorporation.

[9] Some authoritarian countries, however, that favor primordial identities or agendas have, nonetheless, attempted to mobilize their diasporas (Brubaker 1996; Bauböck 2005b).

Party systems in which unstable political alignments prevail are more likely to facilitate the incorporation of emigrants since political parties are obviously trying to expand their constituencies to win elections. Unless emigrants' agendas can become part of a broader political discourse their interests will have limited chances of being represented in their country of origin. Despite his important contributions, Itzigsohn's analysis of the role of the administrative apparatus does not explain how different institutional dynamics within that apparatus affect the ways in which emigrants will be incorporated in their country of origin.

Goldring (2002) and Smith (2003) consider how sub-national institutions and institutional reform affect emigrants' organization and incorporation into their homeland political and policy processes. Goldring, for example, evaluates the effects of decentralization and devolution of power to state and local authorities in Mexico on the incorporation of emigrants. She shows that results of these policies have been uneven, and that some states have been more effective in institutionalizing their relationships with their expatriate populations than others. Goldring also explains how recent reforms of the state apparatus have determined the forms of political membership offered by sending states. In the Mexican case, the attempt by the state to withdraw from the developmental field and implement a neo-liberal project in which individuals obtain goods and services through the market has been critical. State policies thus "emphasize local cost-sharing and responsibility and claim to reverse state paternalism." (Goldring 2002, p. 69). In this context emigrants have become active in the economic and social development of their regions of origin. In exchange, the Mexican state offered in the 1990s a limited form of membership in the polity, which Goldring calls a "marketized-membership." This

membership depends on migrants' "affective ties and nationalist sentiments to mobilize and maintain financial contributions and remittances, but it provides no formal mechanisms for political participation." (Goldring 2002, p. 69). Emigrants, nonetheless, have been able to renegotiate the terms of this membership by using their increased political leverage to exert pressure over local and national institutions to open up new spaces for their political participation. Goldring's analysis was prior to the approval of the right to vote by mail from abroad in Mexico's presidential elections. Her analysis, therefore, does not explain this event. Following her line of argument one would assume that the most relevant factor in facilitating the opening of new mechanisms for the formal participation of emigrants was the pressure they exercised over the political system. However, from her analysis it is not possible to derive the political conditions and arrangements that increase the likelihood of success.

Like Goldring, Smith (2003) criticizes standard transnational approaches for dealing only with how politics take place across borders, but not with how migration and migrant involvement in the political life of their homeland "changes the institutions of the polity and its conception of membership" (Smith 2003, p. 302). He shows that the political incorporation of emigrants in Mexico has not been uniform: different relationships to the state and labor markets in Mexico and the United States yield different forms of membership in the polity. Those migrant organizations, particularly from Zacatecas, that have exploited the political opportunity structures opened up for them by their intensified relationship with their state of origin have gotten stronger forms of membership. In contrast, those migrant organizations, specifically those from Oaxaca, that have relied on international human rights organizations to advance their interest in

their region of origin have gotten weaker forms of membership. In both cases, however, these organizations have been able to exercise some pressure on their states of origin and thus advance their specific interests.

1.5 A Political Opportunity Structure Approach

I propose a political opportunity structure approach that can accommodate the dual process of political incorporation into both home and host polities. Political opportunity structure theory (POS) posits that the success or failure of an excluded group to mobilize, organize and advance its collective interests depends directly on the receptivity of the political process and the institutional spaces available. When the government consistently represses a social group or guarantees that it remains in a marginal status, the chances for this group to mobilize and act on its behalf are limited if not nil. For an excluded group to have at least some political success, the government must be willing to tolerate its emergence as a social movement, which means that it must allow it "to mobilize sufficient political leverage to advance its collective interests through non-institutionalized means" (Costain 1994, p. 12). In most instances, social movements and groups that have been able to advance their political aspirations have received at least some explicit support from the government (Costain 1994; McAdam 1999). Political institutions and processes, therefore, are clearly determinants of the timing and success of these movements.

The political opportunity structure approach emerged from resource mobilization theory (RM) that was originally developed to study the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Until then, theories of social movements argued that they resulted from the relative deprivation of individuals that were alienated from the means of production and

mobilized to disrupt and change the social order. In contrast, RM theory suggested that social movements arose when a "requisite level of resources was brought together to push for change" (Costain 1994, p. 7). These included material resources as well as an entrepreneurial leadership, a communications network and the capacity to attract new adherents and allies to their cause. Once the movement emerged, its success would be determined by its ability to gain more external resources and allies and by being able to present its demands in non-threatening incremental ways, thus reducing the political costs for the government and their allies in accepting their demands.

New research on social movements has stressed that although the availability of outside resources had an impact on the level of activity of specific movements, there was not enough data to demonstrate that access to resources was the main factor in determining the origins and development of these movements. Furthermore, it was not possible to demonstrate that by pursuing an incremental approach, social movements would accomplish their goals more effectively. In contrast, this research showed that the level of receptiveness of the political process and institutions was decisive in facilitating the emergence and success of these movements[10]. As Tarrow lucidly posed it: "If collective action is a form of politics, then as in conventional politics, there must be a set of constraints and opportunities that encourage or discourage it and lead it towards certain forms rather than others" (Tarrow 1988, p. 429). Different institutions and institutional practices within the state generated this set of constraints and opportunities.

In this regard, POS theory shares with RM an interest in studying groups' strategies to mobilize different political resources and it also argues that these groups can modify the opportunities available to them once they have emerged as social movements.

[10] For a review of this research see Tarrow (1988; 1994) and Costain (1994).

However, it also stresses the need to identify the institutional barriers and opportunities that facilitate the initiation of collective action and affect its success.

While there was already some research on constraints prior to the emergence of the policy process approach--particularly to explain the obstacles that limited the collective action of the poor--the identification of those opportunities that incite collective action has been a more difficult task. What is clear is that opportunities originate from major institutional changes or from unstable balances of power that open the doors to the inclusion of new actors. Changes in the main conceptions about who belongs to the polis or the existence of unstable political alignments, for example, clearly facilitate the entrance of newcomers. In addition, the success of social movements is dependent on the balance of power between weakened governmental institutions and a newly empowered group (Costain 1994).

In adopting this approach, Koopmans and Statham (2000b) link political institutions of the host country with public discourses about integration/incorporation and with the level of actual interaction among immigrant organizations and other actors, including not only national and sub-national actors but also other ethnic and non-profit organizations. The authors attempt to go beyond standard neo-institutional analyses by avoiding a vague use of the notion of institutions and specifying "much more clearly what these consist of, which dimensions can be distinguished and what indicators might be used in empirical investigation" (Koopmans and Statham 2000b, p. 31). They propose four major categories of analysis: national cleavage structures, institutional actors and legal arrangements, prevailing elite strategies, and contingencies of time and place. I intend to extend this model to cover the incorporation of emigrants in their homeland and

to evaluate whether the increased interactions of emigrants with their homeland affect the ways they incorporate into host countries.

1.5.1 National Cleavage Structures

National cleavage structures define the political space available for newcomers[11] to introduce claims into the polity. They include debates over who belongs to the nation and who does not and how access to political membership is constructed. I track the meaning of the nation in both Mexico and the United States and the avenues of access to citizenship in both countries. I situate discussion of nation and citizenship within wider political debates.

With respect to the United States, I will show that immigrants have always been participants in the national discourse, as one of the founding ideas of the American national project is that the United States is a country of immigrants. However, this inclusiveness has been selective as some national groups have been readily accepted into the polity while others have not. Mexican immigrants for a long time were identified as sojourners and thus had almost no chance of being incorporated. This has to do with the fact that Mexican immigration to the United States has always been informal with a large portion of it outside the law and this had a negative effect on the tendency to accept Mexicans as permanent members of the polity. In addition, I show that inclusiveness has been contested in different periods of American history by political coalitions opposing open immigration.

With respect to Mexico, I explore how the goal of consolidation led the Mexican state to develop inward- looking nationalist policies such that those who left the country

[11] Newcomers are here understood as immigrants with respect to their country of residence and emigrants with respect to their country of origin.

were identified in the national imaginary as traitorous. Therefore, although there were some emigrant demands for political rights, particularly in the late 1920s, they were not realized because the national discourse excluded those who did not reside inside the physical territory of the state. Six decades later, the government of Ernesto Zedillo recognized emigrants as part of the nation. President Vicente Fox took this a step further by calling them "national heroes." I evaluate why these changes took place and why emigrants became a constituency to be cultivated. In addition, I explore the guiding principles of Mexican citizenship law and investigate how Mexico's recent adoption of dual nationality policy came about.

1.5.2 Institutional Actors and Legal Arrangements

Institutions and legal arrangements determine the channels of access for newcomers and they can be more open or closed. These include integration policies in the host country such as citizenship and immigration laws. Lack of access to full citizenship rights denies immigrants, in most cases, an electoral strategy even when their numbers may make them a potentially significant constituency for political parties. In the same vein, access to full political rights determines the extent to which emigrants will influence the electoral process of their country of origin.

With respect to the United States I explore how immigration and settlement policies as well as citizenship laws have constrained in some cases and opened in others political opportunities for Mexicans. I show, for example, that the 1986 amnesty that granted legal status to millions of undocumented Mexicans facilitated their gradual incorporation by fundamentally changing the nature of Mexican migration from a traditionally circular process to one that is now predominantly permanent. This law also

contributed to the improvement of the socioeconomic status of some Mexicans in the United States as their newly won status allowed them to compete more effectively in the labor market.

I also study the role of settlement policies in facilitating the adaptation of newcomers in the host country and consider the role of administrative and political institutions and non-state institutions such as unions and not-for profit organizations in shaping the incorporation of Mexicans in the United States.

My analysis will be centered on debates between the states and the Federal government in the United States. Local governments have had major responsibility for integrating newcomers. This has politicized immigration as newcomers have been held responsible for budgetary pressures in states and localities. Finally, I look at the role of local and national electoral systems as well as the institutional configurations of different branches of government.

With reference to Mexico, I discuss how centralism and federalism affects the incorporation of emigrants. I explore how political parties have attempted to engage emigrants in recent years and convert them into a political constituency. This contrasts with a long Mexican tradition to discourage politicians from campaigning outside of the national territory because it was seen as allowing foreign intervention into domestic politics. The structure of the electoral system allows certain forms of incorporation, as some emigrants have been integrated into the lists that parties construct to elect their candidates for Congress without submitting them to the voters[12]. Emigrants have thereby

[12] In Mexico part of the lower House and the Senate is selected by direct vote and part through a distribution of seats according to the percentages of votes each party received.

had the chance to be represented in that branch of government even before they were allowed to vote in presidential elections.

1.5.3 Prevailing Elite Strategies / Political Culture and Idioms.

As Koopmans and Statham put it, this category refers "to the rules and procedures that have historically emerged within a polity for managing and resolving conflicts and for dealing with political challengers" (2000b, p. 34). In the United States, for example, immigrants have been included in the political system through a series of policies that determine access to economic and political resources depending on the national or ethnic classification of the group. Although ethnicity is a major issue in politics and determines many of the political alliances and coalitions that form, there are no political parties that represent any specific group as there are in other countries. Therefore, in order to voice their demands immigrant groups need to appeal to other mainstream groups. They need to join coalitions at the local, sub-national, and national levels. Their potential to become an important political constituency or a source of major social conflict will determine the extent to which dominant elites pay attention to their demands.

The Mexican political system was long closed to those sectors that could not participate in the modernization process. These included people in the countryside who ended up migrating to the cities and, in many cases, to the United States. Exclusion from politics at home was at first compounded by exclusion abroad. This situation changed after Mexico confronted a series of new challenges related to economic reform that required the inclusion, if only partially, of new actors. Mexican authorities first tried to involve emigrants in economic and political development by granting them limited citizenship rights (that is, civil and social but not political rights). It was not a seamless

process, however. For example, in the 1990s consular officials and state governors loyal to the PRI made some attempts to include emigrants as a new corporative sector within the state. More recently, emigrants increased their autonomy and demanded a more democratic form of incorporation. By 2005, they were finally granted the right to vote in Mexico's presidential elections.

1.5.4 Contingencies of Time and Place

A large part of the incorporation process is determined by specific balances of power and the alliance structure at a given time and place. The composition of the party system, the relative strength of the political parties, and divisions within the elite at a given moment open up opportunities for newcomers that otherwise would be unavailable. I explore how characteristics of the American political system at the national level, and in the cities in which I conduct fieldwork, shape political opportunities for Mexicans. Also I investigate how specific struggles within Mexican politics between the states and the central government, and between the legislature and the executive have unexpectedly created channels for emigrant influence.

In this analysis the state is the central frame of reference in determining the forms of political participation of migrants and their political agendas and goals. States are also major actors in determining the ways and the extent to which migrants will be incorporated into the polities of both their places of origin and residence. States have considerable capacity to regulate migration and to define who belongs to the nation and who does not. As Geddes (1994) has pointed out, state actions can clearly increase the political power of some actors previously unorganized or loosely organized and diminish the power of other groups considered highly influential until then. Policies increasing the

power of emigrants vis-à-vis the Mexican state implemented since the early 1990s are an excellent example. Without state intervention, migrants would have had more difficulty organizing. These Mexican state activities have also allowed Mexicans in the United States to apply their newly acquired political strength towards a more active political and social agenda in their country of residence. Among the signs of Mexicans starting to mobilize vis-à-vis their host society are the attempt of Mexican organizations to influence the Department of Treasury's decision about the validity of the *matrícula consular* to be used as an identification card in the United States, their opposition in California to Arnold Schwarzenegger's campaign for governor and proposition 54[13] in 2004, and their participation in 2006 in major rallies, in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Denver, Phoenix, Milwaukee and many other cities against a House bill that proposed to criminalize illegal migration, impose sanctions on people who help the undocumented, and deny accelerated paths towards legalization (Bernstein 2006).

1.6 Adaptation

Turning specifically to the process by which Mexican migrants undertake collective action, I carry out extensive research on the formal organizations for first-generation Mexicans. First, I identify why and how Mexican migrants have organized in the United States and the extent to which their organization has been influenced by different institutions and institutional practices in both Mexico and the United States. Second, I examine organizational agendas: the ways they identify and distinguish the causes of the problems they confront, present solutions to them, and mobilize the community to take advantage of the opportunities opened up for them by institutional

[13] This Proposition bars the state of California from collecting ethnic data. This would affect the collection of medical and other records useful to implement policies focused on the specific needs and problems of different ethnic groups.

practices of both their home and host countries. What is their predominant orientation, the homeland or the host society? Third, I consider the process of leadership formation. I identify organizational leaders and trace their activities. I consider if they reinforce a primordial Mexican identity or a more pragmatic one that facilitates adaptation to the host country. Also, I consider the extent to which the leadership reproduces democratic values acquired in their host society or more authoritarian ones inherited from their political experience in Mexico. Fourth, I focus on the extent of institutionalization, that is, the likely continuation of organizational influence in the wider Mexican community living in the United States. Lastly, the source of their finances is particularly relevant because organizations that have established a stable financial base have greater possibilities of surviving than those that have not.

To conclude, I deal with the extent to which the organizations have developed political leverage towards home and host countries. I identify the number and kind of relationships they have established with different institutions and actors in both countries. I also evaluate whether they have participated in political activities in either country and the extent to which these activities have brought specific benefits to them. I argue that the greater their access to different institutional settings in the home and host countries, the greater their political leverage and the greater the chances for incorporation. Evidently, the organizations' political leverage and their hopes of facilitating the process of incorporation depend on the quality of access to institutions and political actors and on their capability of influencing political decisions.

The attention I pay to the study of first-generation Mexican associations is supported by recent research conducted by European scholars on the levels of political

participation of different ethnic groups in their host societies (Bousetta 2000; Berger, et al. 2004; Fennema 2004; Jacobs, et al. 2004; Koopmans 2004; Odmalm 2004; Tillie 2004; Togeby 2004). One of their major findings is that immigrant associations increase the levels of political participation of newcomers, because they create civic engagement and political trust among their members. The larger the number of ethnic associations and the denser the networks they establish, the greater the level of participation they promote. These findings are also dependent on the type and quality of the organizations and other factors such as the social capital of each specific group, and the "kinds of networks in which associations are potentially embedded" (Jacobs, et al. 2004, p. 422).

To corroborate their argument, these scholars have conducted tests at the individual level to measure participation based on membership in ethnic organizations in various European countries. The data demonstrate that there is a correlation between membership in ethnic associations and levels of political participation of newcomers. Although I do not present similar data, information I collected seems to corroborate their view. Interviews with the leaders and members of the organizations, as well as direct observation through participation in some of their events, identified people interested in participating in the political life of their home country but also that of their host, even in cases where the original orientation of their organizations was towards their sending country. Although most of the organizations I studied did not engage actively in politics in the United States at least prior to the approval of the Sensenbrenner bill in December 2005, it is clear that they motivated discussions about major topics of political relevance, including immigration and local and national elections.

1.7 Research Strategy and Methodological Considerations

I study 32 organizations in four cities: Dallas, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York. These cities have large Mexican immigrant communities and represent different patterns and timing of migration flows and diverse political and socio-economic settings. The organizations were identified through conversations with Mexican consular officials, with political activists, and with the leaders of some of the organizations themselves who referred me to others. In addition, I reviewed newspapers in Mexico and the United States and did a follow up monitoring of internet email groups focused on Mexicans living abroad.

I selected three types of organizations that have been established by Mexican immigrants in the last two decades:

1. Organizations focused on the communities and states of origin including home town associations (HTAs) and state federations (SFs);
2. Political organizations; and
3. Service organizations.

HTAs have as their main purpose collecting funds to foster development in communities of origin. Through this activity they also help immigrants maintain ties with their culture, costumes, language and traditions. On some occasions, HTAs integrate into umbrella organizations called SFs. This is particularly likely when there are a number of HTAs from the same state of origin in one place, or there is prodding by state governors and/or consular officials from Mexico. Although both HTAs and SFs were nonsectarian voluntary organizations when first established, more recently they have

played active political roles and have turned their attention to the host country and joined pro-immigrant initiatives.

Unlike HTAs, political organizations are not set up according to state of origin; instead, they are national interest groups that lobby the Mexican government as well as push agenda items in the United States. These organizations have explicit political goals, most of them related to Mexico. In particular, they have actively sought the right to vote from abroad in Mexican elections and, when that goal was achieved, focused on motivating emigrants to participate in Mexico's 2006 election. Their main agenda in the United States supports immigrant rights as well as a regularization program for undocumented Mexicans.

Service organizations have as their main purpose the provision of services such as legal advice and skill development and training programs for immigrants to facilitate their adaptation. Although non-political in nature, they tend to participate in campaigns to defend immigrant rights and support amnesty for undocumented immigrants. They also tend to work closely with grassroots organizations in the United States. They have focused on political issues in Mexico and were advocates of the right to vote from abroad.

To understand the origins, dynamics, and patterns of action of these organizations, I conducted a series of in-depth interviews with their leadership, following a structured questionnaire (see Appendix A). These interviews took place during multiple visits to the cities and in follow-up phone conversations between 2001 and 2004 and a few more in 2006. On occasion, I also attended meetings, including observing the selection of new leadership and visits by Mexican officials. I collected magazines and pamphlets

published by these organizations and followed their activities in Spanish-language and mainstream newspapers published in the four cities. I also consulted Mexican newspapers that usually publish news about emigrants, including *La Jornada*, *Reforma*, and *La Imágen* from Zacatecas. In addition, I regularly followed at least six internet discussion groups created by Mexicans abroad. To develop an understanding of the policies of Mexico and the United States towards migrants I carried out interviews with national officials in both countries.

1.8 Organizations of the Dissertation

The next chapter presents a historical analysis of the politics of immigration, settlement, and citizenship policies in the United States. It evaluates how the national cleavage structures, institutional actors and legal arrangements, prevailing elite strategies and contingencies of time and place have broadly determined the patterns of incorporation of Mexicans.

Chapter three traces the politics of emigrant engagement followed by the Mexican state at different periods. Using the same four analytical frameworks, it evaluates how they have generated specific relationships between the Mexican state and Mexicans living abroad. Among other things, I focus on the policy of *acercamiento,* or rapprochement, that the Mexican state has followed in the last two decades and the effects of this policy on the forms of organization of Mexican emigrants and the ways they have articulated their demands towards the Mexican state.

Chapter four presents a general overview of the organizations that Mexicans in the United States have established in the last two decades and shows their general characteristics and resource mobilization capacities--including leadership structure,

degree of institutionalization, and ability to collect funds. I evaluate the extent to which they contribute to the incorporation process of first-generation immigrants into both Mexico and the United States.

Chapters five and six look at the process of political incorporation of Mexicans in the four urban centers where I carried out case studies. I present a review of the political opportunity structure of each city as well as the history of the Mexican communities in those places. This review shows that although Mexicans confront similar obstacles in all the cities distinctive opportunity structures have produced different paths towards incorporation in their adopted country.

Chapter seven presents the general conclusions, evaluates the patterns of incorporation of Mexican migrants in both Mexico and the United States and discusses the empirical and theoretical implications of the study.

CHAPTER 2

FROM SOJOURNERS TO CITIZENS: THE INCORPORATION OF MEXICANS INTO THE UNITED STATES POLITY[14]

2.1 Introduction

For a long time, Mexicans were not regarded as potential members of the American polity, even though they were a constant presence in the United States. This situation made their immigration experience unique. Mexicans were a source of low-wage labor that could be used when the need arose. When barriers to formal immigration were enforced after the First World War to limit European immigration, and when virtually all Asian migrants were banned, Mexican laborers were recruited to work in states bordering Mexico, particularly, in Texas and California. Spokesmen for agricultural interests testifying before Congressional committees dealing with immigration argued that Mexicans came to the United States to work temporarily and, thus, "they were endowed with a 'homing pigeon instinct' that drove them to return" (Zolberg 1999, p. 77). This instinct and the fact that they were considered "half-breeds" by powerful nativist politicians dramatically narrowed the chances of Mexican

[14] This chapter will study the incorporation of Mexicans into the United States polity not as a minority, but as an immigrant group. As Jones-Correa has pointed out, "The study of Hispanic politics so far has been in the context of Latinos as a minority, nor in the context of Latinos as immigrants." This situation has had the problem that immigrants and non-immigrants are treated "unproblematically as members of a single minority group" (Jones-Correa 1998a, p. 3) sharing similar interests and concerns. In fact, and as this dissertation will demonstrate when presenting the empirical data, they often disagree in their agendas and their goals, and not always identify with each other event though they have similar origins. This is particularly clear between first generation Mexicans, and Mexican-Americans.

immigrants incorporating into the United States political system. As Zolberg has pointed out, the objective of the regulatory system that emerged in the United States in the 1920s, which combined drastic barriers to formal immigration with laissez-faire policies regarding the movement of labor across the southern border, makes sense only "if the objective was to deter, not the physical entry of Mexicans into the United States, but rather their social and political entry into American society" (Zolberg 1999, p. 77).

The Civil Rights movement and the legislative and judicial changes it brought about in the mid-1960s and 1970s finally opened doors for Mexicans to incorporate more effectively. The movement led to the questioning of the legitimacy of guest worker programs —the last of which ended in 1964— and made clear that, despite their national or racial origin, those who were invited to work in the United States and settled should be allowed to participate in the political community.

Nevertheless, the incorporation of Mexican immigrants into the United States political system has proceeded steadily since IRCA, at least if one considers behavioral data such as naturalization rates (see Figure 2.1). Even though the rate of naturalization has increased, the total number of Mexicans naturalized annually has fallen (see Figure 2.2) since most of the Mexicans eligible to naturalize under IRCA have already exercised this option. Even if Mexicans are naturalizing and voting at considerably smaller rates than other immigrant groups such as Asians (see Figure 2.1), their large number and presence across the United States has given them the capacity, if still not fully exercised, of deciding close elections in key cities and states. Republican and Democratic politicians have attempted to reach them by embracing issues salient to their concerns.

Figure 2.1: Percent naturalized among legal immigrants eligible to naturalize (Fix, et al. 2003)

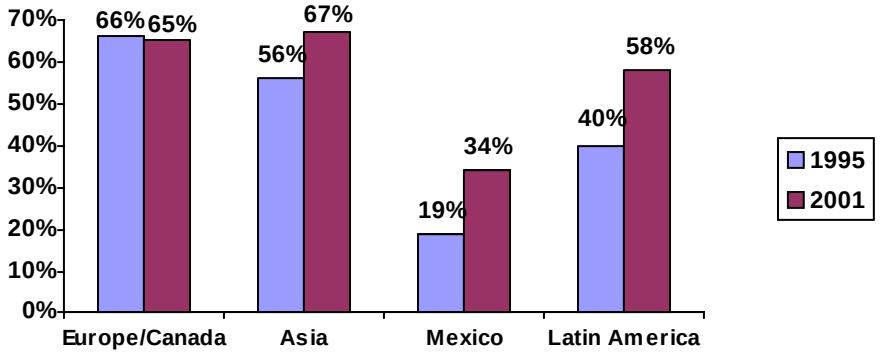
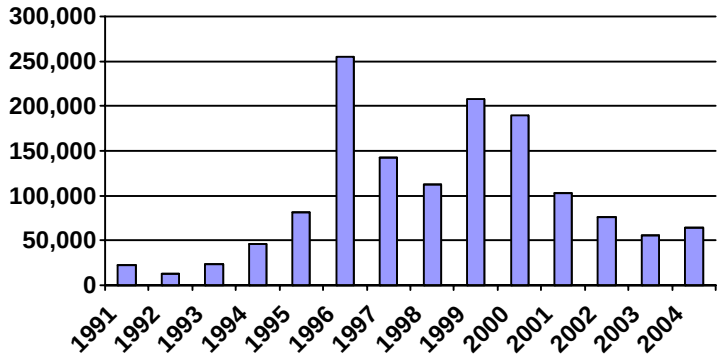


Figure 2.2: Total number of Mexicans Naturalized (USDHS 2004)



These are evidently great advances for Mexicans but they have a long way to go in the incorporation process. At the local level, for example, they have had little influence in the decision making process of city councils, school districts, and the police, even though in some localities they constitute a substantial percentage of the population. At the state and national levels, they have barely had some bearing on decisions

regarding major issues that affect their daily lives such as welfare, health, and immigration policies. Considering that Latinos, the majority of whom are Mexicans or people of Mexican descent, are now the largest minority in the United States, it is striking that few have been elected to political office[15]. In addition, there is still the large pool of undocumented immigrants that do not have any clear prospects of having access to citizenship status, a plight that considerably limits their prospects of incorporating into the polity.

Various obstacles have affected the incorporation of Mexicans into the American political system. Some of these can be attributed to their specific characteristics as a group, including their undocumented status, low levels of educational attainment, and low incomes compared to the American average and those of other immigrant groups. Furthermore, the proximity of their homeland has inhibited formal settlement in the US. Other obstacles, however, are external to the group and have to do with institutional barriers that have consistently limited their chances to organize and mobilize.

This chapter traces the evolution of US policy toward the incorporation of Mexican immigrants into the political system. I use a political opportunity structure approach to describe how different institutions and institutional practices have at some times constrained and at others opened up opportunities for Mexicans to incorporate. I argue that the structure of opportunity and constraint Mexican immigrants confront in the United States has been a major factor shaping their aspirations and political behavior.

[15] At the national level, Latinos represent about 5% of the US House of Representatives. In the case of the Senate only in the 2004 election did Latinos gain some representation by electing one Cuban-American from Florida and one Mexican-American from Colorado. At the subnational level, the data is more mixed. In some states they have gained more representation. For example in New Mexico, Latinos represent 43% of the State's House of Representatives. In Illinois, whose Latino population in the 2000 census was 12.3%, Latinos held only 6% of the seats in the House.

Although all immigrant groups confront an institutional setting to which they will have to adapt and by which they will be integrated (Soysal 1994), each of them, nonetheless, confronts specific structures of opportunity and constraints that affect their specific collective action (Rosenhek 1999). National groups that have a warmer welcome mobilize and organize differently than groups that face, from the beginning, a scenario that excludes them from the polity.[16] In the case of Mexican immigrants, the consistent system of exclusion they confronted in the United States at least until the mid-1980s, limited their collective action and restricted their capacity to incorporate. That is why prior to the 1980s it is difficult to identify first-generation Mexican organizations except for a few isolated hometown associations. The recent proliferation of Mexican organizations in the United States is thus linked to the fact that a large number of immigrants finally have access to legal status and thus to membership in the polity. Thanks to this legal change they were able to develop the necessary resources, including an entrepreneurial leadership, regardless of the orientation of their political agenda either towards their home or host countries.

Nevertheless, we must ask why they embraced a political agenda that is more oriented to the homeland than to the United States. I argue that this is related to two facts: first, political actors in the US have made little effort to mobilize Mexican immigrants; and second, there have been limited opportunities for first generation Mexicans to advance their interests through the institutions and political processes of their host country. In contrast, they have confronted a more positive scenario vis-à-vis their home

[16] It is true that some groups that receive a positive welcoming in their host country may have an agenda that is highly focused on their home country as well. This is the case of people from Cuba that arrived in the United States after the 1959 Revolution in that country. However, since they have access to the system of opportunities of their host society, they usually try to advance their political agenda towards their homeland through the institutions and political processes of their receiving country.

country since the 1990s when the Mexican government radically changed its policies towards the Mexican diaspora (See Chapter 3).

The structure of opportunities and constraints Mexican immigrants have confronted in the United States can be classified in four interlinked categories originally proposed by Koopmans and Statham (2000b): national cleavage structures, institutional actors and legal arrangements, prevailing elite strategies, and contingencies of time and place.

2.2 National Cleavage Structures

American institutions and politicians have constantly portrayed the United States as a country of immigrants. This view has been popularized and romanticized in literary products and Hollywood movies, which have shown the country as a promised land for those suffering economic adversity or religious and political intolerance in other parts of the world. Many Americans and many potential immigrants believe the US is open to all those who want to come and share in the values of freedom, democracy and equal opportunity embodied in the American constitution. This image of universal openness, however, conflicts with historical evidence. As many studies have demonstrated, the inclusiveness of American institutions and political discourse has been in reality selective, as some national groups have been more easily accepted into the polity than others (Hingham 1966; Fuchs 1990; Perea 1996; Smith 1997b; Tichenor 2002). As Smith points out, “for over 80 percent of U.S. history, American laws declared most people in the world ineligible to become full U.S. citizens solely because of their race, original nationality, or gender” (Smith 1997b, p. 15).

There are at least two approaches to understanding the prevailing notions about membership in the American polity: "Triumphant Liberalism" and "multiple traditions". The first derives from Myrdal (1964) and Almond and Verba (1980). In the immigration field it is associated with the work of Lawrence Fuchs (1990), and with the positions taken by both the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy of the 1980s, and the United States Commission on Immigration Reform[17] of the 1990s. The second approach is well-illustrated in the work of Smith (1997b) and Tichenor (2002)[18]. Fuchs (1990) argues that even though there have been some exclusionary periods in American history that have limited the acceptance of specific national groups, there is, ultimately, a prevailing and consistent set of national values –a "civic culture"—that celebrates ethnic and racial diversity and at the same time unifies American society. This "civic culture", which includes values such as freedom of speech, equal opportunity, and democracy, has gradually become universalized. It has helped protect ethnic and religious diversity in the United States and has inhibited and ameliorated racial, ethnic and religious conflict.

In contrast to political commentators and scholars who saw the civil rights movement and the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act as a real threat to American unity, Fuchs contends that what was passing away were not the unifying liberal and democratic principles of American society but those exclusionary values that did not belong to "the system of voluntary pluralism based on individual rights and protected by the civic culture" that was established after the American Revolution (Fuchs 1990, p. xvii). Since the civil rights movement, this system has guided major immigration policies including the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act that dismantled the

[17] See specifically the following report: USCIR (1997).
[18] Other authors that can be also considered as taking the second approach are: (Daniels 1990; Takaki 1990; Perea 1996; Sánchez 1998; Desmond 1999).

national origins quota system, the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) that granted amnesty to undocumented immigrants, and the 1990 Immigration Act that facilitated a substantial increase in legal immigrant admissions.

The system of "voluntary pluralism" Fuchs identifies was prominent in determining the incorporation of immigrants from Germany, Ireland and, later on, Southern and Eastern Europe. The underlying logic of this system was that immigrants were free to maintain the "affection for and loyalty to their ancestral religions and cultures" but were expected to develop an American identity "by embracing the founding myths and participating in the political life of the Republic" (Fuchs 1990, p. 5). Immigrants, then, were able to choose to be ethnic or to cross the boundary and be only American without any hyphenation, and either choice would be protected by the "civic culture", which guaranteed freedom of religion and speech, and equality before the law.

The process of incorporation of these European immigrants was not without difficulties, as Fuchs recounts. English, Scots, Dutch and Scandinavians had the easiest road, because they were Protestant. A large portion of Germans and Irish confronted more difficulties being accepted because they were Catholic. The major obstacles, however, were faced by Eastern and Southern Europeans not only because of their religion, which was either Catholic or Jewish, but because most of them, fleeing from social and political conflicts in their homeland, arrived to the U.S. with little money or skills. Nonetheless, all these groups eventually moved with relative ease[19] into the political life for at least two reasons: first, they were white, a fact that granted them eventual access to citizenship, and thus to political rights; and second, they were helped

[19] It is important to clarify, that those that integrated into the political life were mostly males, at least until 1920 when women were finally granted the right to vote through the Nineteenth Amendment.

by the political machines that were being developed in the last part of the nineteenth century in American cities. In addition, efforts at Americanizing immigrants during the Progressive era facilitated their adaptation.

The system of "voluntary pluralism" was not extended to other immigrant and racial groups. Parallel systems of incorporation–or systems that inhibited incorporation—that worked outside the civic culture and were coercive were implemented against African-Americans, Asians and Mexicans. African-Americans were in the least enviable position. They were locked into a caste relationship and denied any meaningful participation in the "civic culture", and most chances of economic progress. This system Fuchs calls "caste pluralism". Since they were believed to be intellectually, spiritually, and physically inferior to whites, they were not granted, at the beginning of the Republic, access to membership into the polity, as were European immigrants. Even those founding fathers that opposed slavery did not contemplate citizenship for blacks because they thought that whites and blacks could never live peacefully side by side. Although the fifteenth amendment granted political rights to African Americans in 1870, they were kept virtually outside the civic culture for most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through different means and stratagems devised by racist and segregationist interests and institutionalized in the political system. Only after the civil rights movement in the 1960s were blacks able to break into the system and have access to some of the privileges already granted to white citizens, including the franchise.

Asians and Mexicans were also denied access to the civic culture for most of the twentieth century. Along with African-Americans, Asians and Mexicans were considered unfit to become American citizens because they were stigmatized as racially and morally

inferior. Their presence in U.S. territory was expected to be temporary and their labor was systematically exploited with the enforcement and cooperation "of national and state governments, the local police and the system of justice" (Fuchs 1990, p. 111). For this reason, Fuchs calls the system implemented towards them "sojourner pluralism". As Fuchs explains, other immigrant groups such as Italians, Greeks, Turks, Poles, and French Canadians were also sojourners, because they went back and forth to their homelands. The difference, however, is that "they were not subject to widely enforced systems of sojourner pluralism that made Asian and Mexican workers particularly vulnerable to employer abuse" (Fuchs 1990, p. 111).

The Naturalization Law that dated back to 1790 made Asian immigrants ineligible for citizenship. No such provision existed specifically for Mexicans and those who immigrated lawfully had the choice of becoming citizens. However, since most came without authorization, a process institutionalized by an alliance between employers and law enforcement authorities, they faced political and legal restrictions. When in 1870 persons of African descent were granted the right to naturalize, a Republican Senator, Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, proposed that this right should be extended to other nonwhite groups as well. Nativist interests in Congress, nonetheless, rejected this proposition. By 1882, Chinese laborers were effectively prohibited from immigrating to the United States. Japanese, Korean and Filipino migration was eventually severely controlled as well. Mexican migration, in contrast, continued to flow steadily at different periods during the twentieth century, depending on the needs of the American economy and, particularly, the agricultural interests in Texas and California. When their labor was not needed anymore, many were deported back to Mexico. Some, however, stayed and

settled and made some economic progress thanks to cracks in the exclusionary system. However, as in the case of Chinese and other Asian groups that settled in the United States, access to formal citizenship and thus to political rights was readily available only for the second generation through the *jus soli* system. Acquisition of political rights accelerated only after the civil rights movement, which finally introduced persons of Mexican origin to the system of voluntary pluralism.

Fuchs' description of the threefold pluralism-- voluntary, caste, and sojourner-- shows that throughout American history exclusionary policies have been pursued. Nonetheless, his view is optimistic because he argues that ultimately the institutional restrictions on all previously excluded groups have been lifted. His view is also optimistic because he thinks that all immigrant groups have eventually embraced the civic culture. For this reason he thinks that the presence of very different national groups does not represent a disruption of the unifying principles that constitute the civic culture, and, furthermore, their incorporation into the polity is imminent. Immigrants, Fuchs concludes, have transformed the civic culture within the parameters of the civic culture itself, and by doing so they have guaranteed their incorporation into the American political system.

A more pessimistic view is proposed by Samuel Huntington (2004b; 2004a). Huntington also argues that America has been guided by a predominant national creed that emerged from the Anglo-Protestant culture of the founding settlers but that was enriched by the views of German, Irish and Scandinavian immigrants who shared with the first settlers a Christian heritage. This creed has as its key elements the "English language; Christianity; religious commitment; English concepts of the rule of law,

including responsibility of rulers and the rights of individuals; and dissenting Protestant values of individualism, the work ethic, and the belief that humans have the ability and the duty to try to create a heaven on earth" (Huntington 2004a, p. 1). Southern and Eastern European immigrants who arrived later than their Western counterparts did not challenge this creed but embraced it as a promise for economic opportunity and political liberty. They thus assimilated in large numbers after World War II, virtually eliminating the idea of ethnicity as a component of national identity in the United States. The problem of race also declined following the achievements of the civil rights movement and the 1965 immigration reforms so that the USA became a multiethnic and multiracial country unified by the common and widely accepted creed. Immigrants from Mexico, however, represent a different challenge. While Fuchs believes that they are embracing America's unifying principles and will assimilate as previous immigrant groups did, Huntington suggests that they will break this unity and transform America into "two peoples with two cultures (Anglo and Hispanic) and two languages (English and Spanish)" (Huntington 2004a, p. 2).

For Huntington, Mexican immigration represents a unique challenge for six reasons: its scale, its persistence, its illegality, its regional concentration, and the facts that Mexico has contiguity with the United States and Mexicans can assert a historical claim to the American territory. The solution, therefore, is to thoroughly assimilate those already here and to prevent more uncontrolled immigration from Mexico.

Huntington's argument is the response from the right to the perceived naiveté of scholars like Fuchs and of attempts to integrate Mexicans and other Western Hemisphere immigrants into mainstream America. Obviously, Mexican immigration has many

distinctive characteristics. However, the fact that culturalist arguments that attach all the responsibility for non-incorporation to immigrant groups are being articulated and taken seriously in America is itself testimony to the difficulties that Mexicans still face in seeking acceptance.

Rogers Smith identifies some of these difficulties. If there is a prevailing "civic culture" in America, he argues, it is not only composed of egalitarian, liberal and republican political principles, as Fuchs argues, but also of inegalitarian views "that have shaped the participants and the substance of American politics throughout history" (Smith 1997b, p. 15). Smith reviews American citizenship laws from the colonial era through the Progressive years and demonstrates that inegalitarian legal provisions are hardly rare. Three ideological streams have informed civic identity and political membership in the United States: liberalism, democratic republicanism, and inegalitarian ascription. These traditions have competed throughout American history and political actors have blended elements of the three in various combinations designed to be politically popular rather than ideologically coherent.

The liberal ideology has helped advance effective claims "for personal independence from repressive structures". It has also institutionalized domestic tolerance and the rule of law, and has legitimized a market system that has promoted economic growth. The republican and democratic conception of society has enhanced the notion of "political self-governance and of membership in a community of mutually supportive citizens" (Smith 1997b, p. 36). Yet, liberalism and republicanism in America have gained part of their appeal from mythical components based on ascriptive views. These views suggest that, regardless of their personal achievements and economic status, Americans

have inborn characteristics that make them part "of a special community, the United States of America, which is, thanks to some combination of nature, history and God, distinctively and permanently worthy" (Smith 1997b, p. 38). Therefore, as much as American citizens have been willing to defend liberal and democratic principles, they have also supported white supremacy and political positions that attempt to preserve traditional gender roles and to uphold Protestantism in public life. On many occasions, they have also resisted egalitarian demands of a liberal and democratic nature when these have challenged the ascriptive sense of belonging.

Smith explains that, contrary to the views of influential authors such as (Hartz 1955), the exclusionary attitudes that are present in America's civic ideals are not vestiges of pre-Revolutionary institutions, but have existed throughout the history of the United States and have helped define membership in the *polis*. For instance, "major liberalizing changes have come more rarely and at far higher costs than many celebratory accounts reveal" (Smith 1997b). There have been three major eras of democratization in the United States: the Revolutionary war and the Confederation years, the Civil War and the Reconstruction era, and the Civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

> It is a sign of how strong resistance to realizing liberal democratic ideals has been that during all these periods Americans fought great wars against opponents hostile to such ideals, first the British monarchy, then the Southern slavocracy, then the totalitarian regimes of Hitler and Stalin in World War II and the Cold War years. Only when those circumstances made fuller pursuit of egalitarian liberal republican principles politically advantageous –indeed, necessary for

national elites –did Americans create state and national democratic republics, free slaves, end Jim Crow, and expand women's rights (Smith 1997b, p. 16).

Even then, many of the accomplishments of these eras proved ephemeral, because many of the rights gained by marginalized groups were taken away from them again through the imposition of new institutional constraints. In this respect, Smith is far less optimistic than Fuchs. From his point of view, all the attempts to democratize the political system and include new groups have generated organized efforts to block them. Although these efforts have not always been successful, in many instances nativist interests have been able to incrementally recover and control some of the political ground they have lost.

Smith does not refer to the particular experience of Mexicans in the United States. However, his analysis has major implications for understanding their incorporation into the United States. Fuchs' work leads us to conclude that the political integration of Mexicans is inevitable and that it will take place incrementally because Mexicans now have access to the system of voluntary pluralism that previously facilitated the incorporation of European immigrants. Smith's analysis suggests, nonetheless, that while a large number of Mexicans in the United States have incrementally gained political status, their incorporation is far from assured because they still have to confront major institutional constraints imposed by recurrent ascriptive and inegalitarian interests affecting the policy process.

Smith's work suggests that the final incorporation of Mexicans into the American political system may require a wider democratization movement, one with strength similar to that of the civil rights movement. In this regard, the ways they organize and the

political resources they develop may be important determinants of their chance of becoming part of a broader democratic coalition against inegalitarian ideologies.

Analyzing the immigration regimes that have emerged over the course of American political development, Daniel Tichenor (2002) arrives at conclusions similar to those of Smith. Smith's multiple traditions approach, Tichenor suggests, helps explain the ideological foundations for restrictionist policy regimes that have emerged in different periods of American history. Nonetheless, Smith's approach has trouble explaining expansive policy choices. Tichenor proposes, instead, an institutional approach to explain the various immigration regimes that have been created throughout American history. He suggests that the interaction of four variables has driven the expansive and restrictive periods of American immigration policies: "historically changing political institutions, policy alliances, privileged expertise, and international pressures" (Tichenor 2002, p. 10).

Tichenor asserts that different traditions in America have played a crucial role in affecting immigration policy. First, he identifies an ideological strand that derives from the Republican and Liberal traditions that has had a clear influence in the expansive immigration policies that the United States has followed over the course of its history (Freeman and Betts 1992). Second, there is also a nativist and ascriptive view entrenched in Americas' political life that has played a decisive role in seeking to restrict the entrance of newcomers. Ultimately, however, the expansive and restrictive periods in American immigration history have been defined more by the dynamics among the institutional variables he identifies than by consistent ideologies. For instance, his work shows that America's immigration regimes have been characterized by ideological ambiguity.

With respect to the case of Mexicans immigrants, Tichenor suggests that ideological aspects have played complex and sometimes contradictory roles in determining their entrance and acceptance in the United States. For example, during one of the most restrictive immigration regimes in the 1930s and 1940s, there was an expansive policy towards the entrance of Mexican workers supported and even encouraged by the same actors who advocated limitations on the entrance of other groups. The ambiguous attitude of these actors had nothing to do with ideological goals, but reflected concrete economic interests deeply entrenched in the political process that had the capacity of influencing the decision-making process in Washington.

In contrast, the period since the 1960s has been one of the most expansive periods in Americas' immigration history. Mexicans have been both the beneficiaries of these policies which reflect liberal and republican strands, but also the target of ascriptive impulses. Tichenor's work allows us, therefore, to understand the paradoxes of immigration policies as reflecting concrete institutional dynamics. Ideological factors, he reminds us, represent basically a negative or positive feedback that influences the system and motivates institutional change, depending on the timing and sequencing of the policy process.

2.3 Institutional Actors and Legal Arrangements.

Host society institutions and legal arrangements clearly affect the extent and manner in which newcomers participate in the political process. They determine the channels through which demands will be expressed and the extent to which they will be taken into account by decision-makers. Key institutions within this category are citizenship, immigration, and settlement policies that are clearly directed at newcomers.

Other institutions and institutional dynamics include institutional gatekeepers that control access to political participation, including political parties, trade unions, and ethnic, religious and humanitarian non-for profit organizations (Ireland 1994); the executive, the judiciary and the legislative powers, and the distribution of power among state and federal governments. In addition, education, housing, and entitlement policies also play a role in determining the political participation of immigrants.

2.3.1 Citizenship and Immigration Policies: An Ambiguous System for Mexican Immigrants

Citizenship is a key institution of contemporary societies because it is at the very core of democracy and national identity. The idea of citizenship implies "not only inclusion, but also exclusion: the citizenship of certain types of persons implies the non-citizenship of others" (Castles and Davidson 2000). In many countries around the world, people have been excluded from full citizenship rights because of their national or racial origins or their gender. In the United States, the struggle for the extension of full citizenship rights to the whole population has been long and arduous and has come at a substantial cost. Excluded groups have had to create political organizations that could enter the wider political arena. In the end, their struggles have been a cornerstone in the democratization of the American political system.

Today immigrants who live in the US and have not yet naturalized are the only significant group lacking citizenship, but this is, at least in terms of the law, merely a transitional problem. Discussion of citizenship rights, however, is more complex than this simple affirmation. As Aleinikoff has pointed out (Aleinikoff 2000), in everyday life newcomers (specifically those who have settled lawfully in this country) may enjoy many

rights and opportunities largely on equal terms with citizens[20]. For example, "they are permitted to work, to travel freely within the state, and to have access to the educational and legal systems of the state, and they may be eligible for social benefits" (Aleinikoff 2000, p. 119; Plascencia, et al. 2003). Some commentators consider these rights a disincentive for permanent residents to naturalize[21]. Notwithstanding these privileges, their lack of political rights, which come with citizenship status, limits their possibilities of representation in the polity. In practical terms, the influence they can exert on the political system is mostly from the outside by following an interest group strategy.

Unlawful immigrants enjoy far fewer rights than those entering legally. First they cannot legally enter the formal job market even if most do work. Second, although their children have access to the educational system thanks to a 1982 Supreme Court ruling, the chances of attending a university are constrained in most states because illegal aliens do not qualify for most state-provided scholarship aid or for resident tuition. In addition, they face more difficulties accessing social benefits that are available to immigrants that have arrived lawfully. Their political weakness makes them an easy target for nativist groups, particularly in difficult economic times or when national security concerns arise. They, nonetheless, have access to court protection and their main support comes from

[20] Also, they share many responsibilities on equal terms with citizens. Among other things, they have to pay taxes, obey the laws, and send the family's children to school.

[21] A political commentator, for example, said the following about Mexicans in the United States:

> People of many lands and costumes have become American –which is different from what they were—even as they refashioned what it means to be American. By contrast, many Mexican immigrants have little desire to "join the American mainstream" precisely because their overriding motive for coming was economic and their homeland is so close. Their primary affection remains with Mexico (Samuelson 2000).

This type of commentary has many flaws. It may be true that the closeness of Mexico may have been in the past a disincentive for them to naturalize. However, it does not take into account all the disincentives that United States institutions have created to deter the incorporation of Mexicans and people of Mexican origin into the American polity. Furthermore, arguing that the lack of desire to become Americans is linked to their economic reason for migrating (a real simplification of their migration experience because a lot of them migrate for other reasons as well) would imply then that all other migrant groups that have migrated to the United States because of economic reasons had also limited desire to become Americans, a proposition that has not been historically true.

not-for profit organizations, and ethnic organizations that provide them with basic services and advocate for them. The predominant form of direct political participation available to the undocumented is to take part in rallies and demonstrations.

Until 1986, when IRCA was approved, most Mexican immigrants living in the United States were undocumented[22]. Their irregular status was the result of the ambiguous regime that had governed their arrival and settlement in the United States for many years. On the one hand, purposefully weak regulatory policies facilitated their entry. On the other hand, they were historically denied access to membership into the polity.

Originally, most Mexicans had come to the United States not as immigrants but as temporary laborers, in the same way that in the 1950s and 1960s Western European countries received a large pool of laborers from former colonies and other developing countries to support their reconstruction and economic development. To facilitate and regularize the arrival of Mexicans in the United States three guest-workers schemes, known as *bracero* programs, were negotiated between Mexico and the United States. The first was established in May 1917, in the middle of the First World War and, paradoxically, the same year that the United States enacted a literacy test for new immigrants. The law made a special exception for Mexican workers[23] –a concession to agricultural interests—who were authorized to enter the country and work (mostly) in the farming sector. This program stipulated that after their contracts expired laborers should

[22] In 2006, this is again the case since there are an estimated 6.5 million undocumented immigrants from a total of 10.3 million foreign born residents from Mexico (Census 2006; Passel 2006).
[23] In 1928, when employer desires for Mexican laborers waned, "U.S. authorities cooperated in keeping Mexicans out by applying the literacy test" (Fuchs 1990, p. 121) for which Mexicans were originally exempted.

return home. However, this last regulation was poorly enforced and many settled in the United States.

A second *bracero* program was launched in 1942 with the outbreak of the Second World War. This program represented a subsidy to southwestern and California growers who argued that to supply enough food for America and American troops during wartime they needed more laborers. The agreement pledged that Mexican workers "would not be used to displace American workers or to lower wages" (Fuchs 1990, p. 12) and that minimum guarantees and working conditions would be granted to the workers. In fact, employers easily evaded these commitments, since Mexicans were unable to join unions and had no rights.

In 1951, when the United States entered the Korean War, a third and final *bracero* program was established. It expanded the presence of Mexican workers in the agricultural sector. By 1960, *braceros* "accounted for 26 percent of the nation's seasonal agricultural labor force" (Fuchs 1990, p. 124). The *braceros* were constantly at odds with organized labor. As Fuchs explains:

> No agricultural workers' strike could be won in the Southwest in the 1950s and 1960s as long as the *bracero* program was in effect. Strikers did not have unemployment insurance against lost wages, and when the strike was over, they found their jobs permanently filled by *braceros* (Fuchs 1990, p. 125).

The emergence of a new liberal coalition that focused on the defense of civil rights finally motivated Congress to take notice of the wretched conditions in which *braceros* worked and lived and to investigate the issue. By 1964, shortly after a report was presented, the *bracero* program was brought to an end.

From the time of the first *bracero* program to the moment the third was terminated, many employers, particularly in Texas[24], continued to hire illegal workers or "wetbacks". This situation was supported by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), which facilitated the entrance of undocumented immigrants when there was demand for them and enforced the law when there was none. When the final *bracero* program was terminated, illegal immigration increased as the demand for Mexican labor grew.

The condition of illegality in which many Mexicans lived in the United States did not improve much with the Hart-Cellar Act, an expansive immigration law that was adopted in the context of the civil rights movement. This act eliminated the national origins quota system and established a preference-based system under which immigrants were admitted as workers, family members, or refugees. The end of the *bracero* program in 1964 and later on a cap on Western Hemisphere immigration in 1976 contributed to a new waves of illegal entries (Tichenor 2002).

By the 1970s, it was evident that the problem of illegal immigration required a different solution, particularly when the number of apprehensions of undocumented immigrants had grown from 1,608,356 in the years 1961 to 1970 to 11,883,328 in the years from 1971 to 1980 (Tichenor 2002, p. 225). As in Europe, guest-worker programs to regulate the huge flows of Mexican migration were not an option anymore. The Civil Rights movement in the 1960s had helped expand individual and membership rights, thus

[24] Mexico opposed Texas participation in the second *bracero* program because of its Jim Crow laws.

undermining the legitimacy of guest-worker systems, which were based on exclusionary provisions. Other options were, thus, explored[25].

Bills introduced in the House and the Senate proposed the legalization of undocumented immigrants but also contemplated sanctions against employers. Both ideas proved controversial. The Reagan administration resisted the legislation because polls showed that the general public was generally against more immigration and sanctioning employers would affect important business interests. In 1986, after prolonged negotiations, and when it was evident that not tackling the problem would generate a bigger crisis, IRCA was approved and signed into law by President Reagan.

Whatever its awkward origins, the passage of IRCA has proven to be a watershed event for Mexican migrants. IRCA gave access to political membership to those persons working illegally in the United States since 1982. To balance that expansive gesture, it sought to tightly close the doors to new undocumented migrants and encourage the return of those workers who arrived in the United States after that year[26]. IRCA was a near complete failure as a deterrent to new illegal migration, but its amnesty provision led to fundamental political change.

After an expansive period of immigration policy during the mid-1980s and early 1990s a new uncertainty has emerged. Although the American immigration regime is still expansive,[27] as immigration flows to the United States continue steadily, the settlement of new immigrant groups, and especially of Mexicans, has mobilized nativist and restrictionist interests worried about the viability of America as a unified nation, or about

[25] Ironically, in 2006 the United States is again considering this type of program to solve the problem of illegal immigration

[26] The purpose of the 1982 limit established by the law was to avoid a rush of undocumented immigrants trying to get into the country before the bill went into effect.

[27] On immigration regimes, see the work of Tichenor (2002).

the over-population of the territory. During the 1990s, these interests were not able to alter the regime established since the Hart-Cellar Act. For instance, in 1990, Congress raised annual immigration levels by 40% (Tichenor 2002, p. 224). However, a few years later right wing groups were able to press new legislation on Washington with the help of a new Republican majority[28].

As Aleinikoff has explained, the United States has had a prevailing conception that lawful permanent residents are potential members of the polis or "full members-in-training". In 1996, however, Congress approved new welfare legislation that cut-off lawful permanent resident aliens from most federally funded means-tested programs and authorized the states to do the same with state-funded programs. Proponents of this legislation argued that because immigrants received many benefits without naturalizing, citizenship was being devalued, that immigrants were accepted to work and contribute to the society not become wards of it, and that eligibility for welfare was attracting the wrong kinds of immigrants.

That same year the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) was approved by Congress. The main targets of the law were illegal immigrants and people with a criminal record that resided legally in the United States but had not yet naturalized. The act enhanced the policing of national borders. It also established stringent provisions for criminal and undocumented workers and expedited the deportation process. Finally, it introduced new obstacles for legal migration by tightening asylum procedures and requiring U.S. financial sponsors for newcomers entering via the family category.

[28] For more details about the political positions on immigration, see Plotke (1999).

During the 1990s the only solution proffered to the problem of illegal immigration from Mexico was to increase the size and resources of the Border Patrol. By the beginning of the twentieth first century, however, it was evident that this solution not only had not worked, but had created new problems: wider control of traditional crossing points had not deterred illegal immigration[29] (Massey 2005) but had pushed migrants to more dangerous crossing points, thus augmenting the death toll.

The 2000 election of George W. Bush appeared to create a more promising environment for a new approach. In his first year, the President indicated a strong commitment to working with Mexico to develop an accord that would address the issue. Bush understood that Latinos had the prospect of becoming a major electoral constituency. He hoped to break the near monopoly of Democrats over the Latino vote, particularly in California. For almost six months, from February to July 2001, Mexican and American officials negotiated the content of the accord. The guiding idea was that undocumented Mexicans would be able to regularize their status in the United States through a points system and gain legal residence for a period of three to five years. The points system would consider time of residence in the United States, the existence of U.S. citizen children, employer letters showing a willingness to hire the immigrant, and English proficiency. In exchange, Mexico offered to control and reduce emigration emanating from its territory in the next twenty years[30].

The agreement was far less ambitious than the 1986 amnesty. Even so, anti-immigrant groups immediately attacked it when news of the negotiation leaked to the

[29] *The New York Times* reported that the number of illegal immigrants has been growing by 350, 000 each year. By 2004 the number of illegal immigrants in the United States oscillates in between 8 and 10 million people (NYT 2004).

[30] This information is based on the talk given by Demetri Papademetriouat at the International Center for Migration, Ethnicity, and Citizenship, in New York, on October 30th 2001.

press. Although the prospects for adoption seemed dim, by early September the Mexican president Vicente Fox managed to put it back on the agenda during a summit with Bush. A few days later, however, the terrorist attacks of September 11 took place and the windows of opportunity closed again.

Although undocumented immigration from Mexico remains a major problem for the United States, the fight against terrorism has overwhelmed this preoccupation. Since September 11, a new immigration regime seems to be developing, one in which national origin and religious orientation matters a lot more than in the last few decades. Although the most affected by new security and immigration requirements are immigrants coming from Arab countries, an anti-immigrant environment has also affected Mexican immigrants, particularly those undocumented, as there seems to be less tolerance for their presence in the United States. For instance, anti-immigrant groups have advocated further curtailment of the few civil and social rights that undocumented immigrants have, including access to emergency medical care and police protection[31].

With increased pressure to take a decision on the subject, the Bush administration proposed a new immigration reform in January 2004. The plan was geared to satisfy his core business constituency and the Hispanic electorate in a presidential election year. Some analysts, however, also argued that his program attempted to show moderate swing voters that he was still a compassionate conservative (Bumiller 2004). In effect, his proposal was far less ambitious than the one suggested in 2001, showing the strength acquired by conservative and nativist groups since then.

[31] There are current discussions in Congress about making police and hospital workers turn in people they believe might be illegal (Editorial 2003).

Bush's program would let undocumented immigrants obtain work visas for three years, renewable for an unspecified period of time. Temporary workers would be required to return permanently to their country of origin. Although he said that some of them might have the option of acquiring permanent residency, he did not specify how and when that would happen. In effect, therefore, his proposal was for a new version of a guest worker program that did not grant any political rights.

Alternatives to Bush's proposal were proposed in Congress in 2003 and 2005. In 2003 Representatives Jim Kolbe and Jeff Flake, as well as Senator John McCain, all Republicans from Arizona, introduced bills to revise immigration law. The major elements of these bills were similar to those that would have been part of Bush's original immigration accord had it not been derailed by its premature presentation to the public and by the September 2001 events. Along with Bush's original proposal, they also included a major guest worker program to regularize the status of undocumented workers and a road to permanent residence through a points system.

By 2005, Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) summoned himself to the cause and, along with Senator McCain and Representatives Kolbe, Flake and Gutierrez, introduced The Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act of 2005, which was a more refined version of the bills presented in 2003. This act proposed the creation of a temporary visa, the H-5A, to allow foreign workers to enter and fill menial jobs in the United States. Undocumented workers already residing in the country would be able to adjust their status to this visa by showing their work history, clearing their criminal record, and passing a security background check. Additionally, they could qualify for a permanent status by meeting future work requirements, paying substantial fines and fees, as well as

back taxes, submitting themselves to additional security checks, and meeting English proficiency and other civic requirements. Although the bill actually proposed a new guest-worker program, it also included a viable scenario for immigrants to acquire citizenship. The latter was attacked by conservative groups as a magnified repetition of the 1986 Amnesty[32].

A variation to this bill was proposed by Senators John Cornyn of Texas and Jon Kyl of Arizona in 2005. Their bill also included a guest worker program, but mandated that workers return to their countries of origin upon the expiration of their work permits. More focused on the enforcement side, this bill also provided a large increase in border security programs, including 10,000 additional border patrol agents and extra money for surveillance equipment.

Meanwhile, on December 16, 2005, and defying President Bush's 2004 call for a guest worker program, the House of Representatives approved by 239-182 a bill introduced by James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and Peter King (R-NY) that would make it a federal crime to live in the United States illegally. This bill, focused on the enforcement side only, would also criminalize those individuals who helped illegal immigrants to enter or stay in the country. In addition, the bill mandated the construction of reinforced fencing as well as the construction and installation of other physical and technological barriers along approximately 700 miles of the United States-Mexico border.

An uncontestable success for restrictionists and nativists, this bill pushed the immigration debate farther to the right. However, it also had the unexpected consequence

[32] Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, has argued, for example, that this bill "embraces amnesty outright," even though it imposes several obstacles before an undocumented immigrant can actually obtain a permanent resident status (Fitzgerald 2005). The general view of conservative groups is that illegal immigrants should not be allowed to stay in the United States no matter what, because thy have broken the law.

of galvanizing immigrants and their supporters and promoting the creation of a pro-immigrants rights movement. An issue that polarized the debate was President Bush's endorsement of the House bill and the limited flexibility of the Senate's majority leader, Bill Frist, to allow a thorough debate on immigration reform. Frist argued that if Senators did not agree on any other reform by March 27 he would bring to the floor a compromise bill proposed earlier that month by Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) that included many of the tough measures against illegal immigrants of the Sensenbrenner bill but coupled with a guest worker program with no residency provision.

In the months of March, April and May 2006, millions of immigrants marched in the streets of American cities opposing the legislation being discussed in Congress and demanding a legal path for those that reside without legal documents in the United States. For the first time in years, pro-immigrant groups joined their forces to mobilize newcomers. A key and unexpected actor was the Catholic Church, which was adamantly opposed to any bill that criminalized immigrants or those who worked with them since many Catholics are deeply involved in helping them regardless of their legal status. Another unexpected actor in mobilizing the immigrant community, particularly in cities such as Chicago and New York, were the Mexican state federations, many of which turned their attention decisively towards their host society[33].

In this polarized environment, President Bush on May 15 announced a new immigration program that attempted to satisfy the interest of his conservative base, but also recognized the importance of not alienating the Hispanic community from the Republican Party. As was evident in the marches, this community was clearly

[33] Personal interviews of the author with federation leaders in Los Angeles on April 21,' 2006 showed that they spent days personally calling immigrants to participate in the pro-immigrant rally in Los Angeles on March 17, and also in the economic boycott and immigrant rally on May 1st.

disappointed with the anti-immigrant legislation recently proposed and approved in Congress. The center of Bush's new proposal was a provision to deploy up to 6,000 members of the National Guard to enforce the security of the southern border until a similar number of border patrol agents could be trained to take their positions. However, drawing on the McCain/Kennedy bill, he also proposed a guest worker program and a legalization path for undocumented immigrants.

Finally, on May 25th the Senate approved the McCain and Kennedy bill, but with considerable amendments that strengthened its enforcement side and limited the scope of its legalization and guest worker programs. At this writing the fate of both the House and Senate bills is unknown.

The debates on immigration reform and the different bills that have emerged on the subject since 2000 show that the expectations of the population and the political class are different from those that resulted from the civil rights era and that persisted until the 1980s. Since the 1990s amnesty has taken on negative connotations. Furthermore, while after the civil rights movement guest worker programs were abandoned as a viable policy option because they denied political rights to newcomers, in the twenty first century they have become the most attractive initiative to regularize the flows of Mexican migrants to the United States. The acceptance of these programs and of any others that attempt to regularize immigrants, however, is still by no means assured considering the sharp ideological divisions that exist today in the United States. To be implemented they would have to pass the substantial Republican opposition in Congress, particularly in the House, and also the opposition that may emerge from Democrats who believe these programs are not generous enough. As Soysal has pointed out, "host states articulate their interests and

mobilize new policies and strategies according to what is 'acceptable' and 'available'" (Soysal 1994). In contrast to the civil rights era, the current proposals being discussed show that there is strong opposition within the American society to grant formal political rights to temporary workers. Yet, paradoxically, this opposition is also helping mobilize the immigrant community, including Mexicans, towards its host society.

Although the opportunity structure appears to be less favorable to the integration of Mexicans than it was in the 1980s because no straight path to citizenship is being considered, the current environment may have two positive effects for incorporation prospects: on the one hand, the strong anti-immigrant legislation being proposed in Congress is helping mobilize and organize immigrants and their supporters and, on the other hand, if an open-door guest worker program and even a regularization are finally approved in Congress the political leverage of Mexican newcomers over the American political system will certainly increase.

2.3.2 Settlement Policies: Another Obstacle to Incorporation

Settlement policies refer to "state intervention into post-entry experiences of immigrants, refugees and the communities into which they move" (Bach 1992, p. 145). They reflect the character of the home state and clearly determine the ways in which immigrants will incorporate into their receiving polity.

Since the United States has a liberal structure of power, in which state authority is decentralized and political action is often initiated by voluntary organizations, most activities to incorporate immigrants have taken place at the local level. In contrast to other countries, there are few national and official policies to incorporate immigrants (Soysal 1994; Jones-Correa 2002; Bloemrad 2003). Nonetheless, when the national

security interests demand it, specific groups have been favored through policies that have helped them not only to better adapt in the United States, but also to become an important political constituency. A prime example is Cubans who arrived in the United States after the 1959 revolution. This group benefited from a series of policies implemented by the Federal government that bypassed existing government agencies.

As Bach (1992) explains, Cubans represented an immigrant elite. Most of the aid they received focused on making their adaptation in their host society successful. Doctors and teachers received professional retraining that would help them retain their previous social status. The government also funded bilingual education programs that could facilitate the adaptation of their children. By 1966 the Cuban Adjustment Act compensated South Florida for the impact of Cuban refugees on local budgets. This established the precedent of giving direct federal assistance to a locality to support the settlement of particular immigrant groups. Following this principle, other refugee groups were supported as well, particularly when they were fleeing from regimes opposed by the U.S.

In contrast to the support that refugee groups received, Mexican immigrants as well as other groups of newcomers from Third World countries that arrived in the United States after 1965 received little if any help from the federal government. For instance, Bach argues that the *bracero* programs that regulated Mexican migration to the United States at different moments from 1917 to 1964 represented “an admissions policy with a punitive settlement plan” (Bach 1992, p. 152). On the one hand, the American government was directly involved in negotiating the contracting of Mexican workers. On the other, however, it left the responsibilities of employment assistance, housing and

other matters to employers, their agents and local social service groups. This left *braceros* prey to the designs of their employers.

One of the major problems Mexicans confronted is that those arriving legally through the *bracero* program had a temporary status, and were not considered settlers, and therefore, there was no inclination to provide settlement assistance. The situation was even worse for the undocumented. When IRCA was approved, the federal government finally established what could be considered a settlement program that benefited Mexicans. Following the model established by refugee settlement activities, it "provided financial aid to states to cover increased costs to public treasuries as undocumented newcomers adjusted their status" (Bach 1992, p. 157). This financial aid was provided through State Legalization Impact Assistance Grants (SLIAG). However, it had a drawback: "it reimbursed states and local governments while temporarily disqualifying newly legalized workers and their families from federal programs" (Bach 1992, p. 157).

The increased participation of the federal government in settlement policy through these grants became a subject of debate by the early 1990s when the support that was provided to immigrants through these grants became the target of conservative groups. One of the arguments they presented was that immigration was not cost-free, but rather its costs were passed on to taxpayers. A *National Research Council* study, for instance, documented some of these arguments as it demonstrated that although immigration produces net positive fiscal effects for the Federal government, it has a negative fiscal impact on local areas of high immigrant concentration (Edmonston and Lee 1996). This was the context that facilitated the approval of the 1996 welfare reforms that cut-off lawful permanent resident aliens from most means-tested programs.

2.3.3 The Role of Institutional Gatekeepers

In the United States immigrant incorporation is generally seen as an individual choice: the newcomer decides when to naturalize, to register, to vote, and to join political associations. However, there are some organized efforts at incorporation made by private associations. These institutions may increase or decrease the resources available for immigrants to incorporate.

Political parties have been important engines of incorporation of immigrants, particularly at the turn of the twentieth century. Their patronage structures in major American cities of the northeast and Midwest provided immigrants with material benefits that facilitated their adaptation. They also helped them in the naturalization process. In exchange, they expected immigrants to vote the party line, a situation that integrated newcomers into the political system even if their vote was highly controlled. Eventually, immigrant engagement in the political process became freer and more active as some ethnic groups became aware of their political strength and used it to support their own ethnic leaders, or others sympathetic to their cause. This was possible because the non-ideological and decentralized character of American political parties permitted immigrant groups to switch from one party to the other when they thought it advisable.

The role that political parties played was, nonetheless, mixed. In some cities they were more effective in helping immigrants incorporate than in others, and certainly, within those cities, they helped only some immigrant groups incorporate. However, many scholars today doubt that the means they employed were effective in promoting true civic engagement[34]. In any case, the capacity they had to introduce newcomers into the political process was related to the fact that the American polity was in many respects

[34] For a review on the subject see Sterne (2001).

much more open to immigrants than it is today. This was particularly true during the "second party system" that emerged in the 1840s and specifically for males migrating from European countries such as Germany and Scandinavia. At that time, many states allowed immigrants to vote, even without naturalizing, with the goal of encouraging them to settle there. Furthermore, immigrants arrived with an uncommon interest in politics and benefited from a vibrant and relatively accessible political culture.

By the late nineteen century this vibrant political life declined due to Progressive Era civil service reforms aimed at rooting out urban corruption. In addition, new obstacles were imposed to deliberately disenfranchise the masses and deny the right to vote to marginalized minorities and newcomers. These constraints included literacy tests, property requirements, residency rules, and early poll closings. Although machines still played an important role in incorporating immigrants eligible to vote by helping them obtain jobs, advocacy and recognition, their capacity to coax them into the political system declined (Sterne 2001).

In the 1930s the mobilization of European newcomers shifted from the local to the national level thanks to the creation of the "New Deal" coalition that kept Democrats in power almost without interruption until 1968 (Sterne 2001, p. 59). The social welfare programs developed by the Roosevelt administration motivated newcomers to participate actively in the political process and to vote in favor of the Democratic Party. By the 1960s, this enthusiasm, however, declined as the second and third generations were already integrated and there were fewer incentives to participate in the political process.

What role have American political parties played in the incorporation of Mexican immigrants? Certainly, it has been different and more limited than that played in the

incorporation of European migrants. Since Mexicans arriving to the United States were generally considered sojourners, there were few incentives for parties to engage them and introduce them to the political process as newcomers.

In the southwest, Democratic Party's political machines did mobilize second generation Mexicans to vote in the 1920s and 1930s, but Anglo leaders controlled their vote and there was widespread discrimination against them. Diverse organized protests by Mexican-Americans throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and increased mobilization by this group in the context of the civil rights movement, led the Democratic party in the late 1970s to adopt a policy "of having groups such as the Mexican-American Democrats (in Texas) and the Chicano-initiated Hispanic American Democrats become integrated parts of state and national party structures" (de la Garza and Vaughan 1985, p. 246). This was also prompted by increased political participation of Mexican-Americans as a result of the extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1975 to Hispanics, and the organized activities of the Southwest Voter Registration Project and the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF). By the 1980s Mexican-Americans were already positioned as an important pillar within the Democratic Party along with African Americans, even if they still did not vote in very large numbers.

It is clear that first-generation Mexican immigrants have incrementally become an important constituency. Efforts to reach them, however, have been limited and localized. At the local and state levels political parties express interest in newly naturalized immigrants only when elections are competitive or when they are highly concentrated in specific districts thus inevitably having a say in the election.

At the national level since 1996 the Democratic Party has experimented with ethnic-specific campaigning in national elections. By the 2000 elections both the Democratic and the Republican parties attempted to employ a discourse that was appealing to Latino voters. For example, from very early in his campaign, George W. Bush established the practice of answering at least one question in Spanish at his news conferences. He also attended events relevant to Latino leaders, including a US-Mexican Foundation breakfast in San Diego, California, and his first foreign trip as a candidate was to the Mexican border to meet with Mexico's president, Vicente Fox (Jones-Correa 2002). During these elections, both parties had operations targeted to Hispanic voters and donors, including youth organizations and materials and web sites in Spanish.

All these activities show that the attitudes of political parties toward immigrants are changing. However, political parties cannot play the role in mobilizing immigrants they did before. When they were in their formative period, a lot of their activity was at the grassroots level. Nowadays, political parties have very defined constituencies, their grassroots activities have largely withered away, and in their place are professional political activists that target audiences via mass mailings and television advertising.

In locations where party machines still play an active role, they represent more an obstacle to the incorporation of immigrants than a useful vehicle to facilitate this process. As Browning, Marshall and Tabb have noted, today's urban machines are "well institutionalized coalitions that predate minority mobilization of the 1960s." Since they are not oriented toward reform, but to protect the power of the organization as well as the economic interests of its white leadership, they limit the formation of multiracial challenging coalitions, by dividing minorities and co-opting their leadership. Therefore,

although the machines create some minority incorporation and produce some minority-oriented policies, ultimately, they "prevent the mobilization of a liberal, unified minority-based coalition" (Browning, et al. 1990a, p. 217).

2.3.4 The Role of Organized Labor

Organized labor has had, historically, a conflictive relationship with immigrants because they compete with native, unionized workers. Despite that, in the nineteenth century the union federation, the Knights of Labor, helped mobilize newcomers. This federation was open to most immigrant workers regardless of gender, origin, and skill level. It saw politics as a supplement to workplace reform and mobilized workers to defend their rights. However, it subjected its members either to political co-optation by conservative interests or to attacks by a business-state alliance. By 1890, just when new immigration was picking up, the federation fell apart. In its place emerged the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which was much less open to immigrants. The AFL played a pivotal role in supporting the national origins quota system imposed in the 1920s, with the goal of cutting new immigration flows from Europe. Although quite a few affiliates, especially the new unions that emerged in the 1910s, did organize immigrants, particularly Chinese, the AFL remained opposed to new immigration and this is a reason why the quota system persisted until 1965[35].

Despite this, the AFL and the more progressive unions that made up the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), which emerged during the New Deal, played an active role in mobilizing immigrants already present in the United States. By that time,

[35] The position against the quota system changed in the 1950s once it merged with the CIO. From the 1950s onwards, the AFL and the CIO presented a united voice in favor of dismantling this system, a shift that contributed to the ultimate passage of the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act (Tichenor 2002).

immigration flows were small and, therefore, immigrants were not perceived as a major obstacle for improving the working conditions of their members.

The relationship between unions and Mexican immigrants during the 1930s and beyond, however, has been very different. Since Mexican immigrants were constantly present while migration flows from other parts of the world were low, they were a constant threat to the position of unionized workers in the job market. Furthermore, employers frequently used undocumented Mexican immigrants to cross picket lines. From the 1920s, the AFL denounced Mexican migration as a calamity for American workers, and pressured Federal authorities to launch a general crackdown on undocumented Mexican aliens. During the New Deal, the AFL campaigned without success for legislation to impose an annual quota for Mexican immigrants and bar all those ineligible for citizenship, (nonwhite Mexicans) from entering the United States (Tichenor 2002). Organized labor opposed the three *bracero* programs, arguing that they exploited Mexican workers and were detrimental to the working standards of native laborers. Furthermore, in the 1950s AFL complaints against illegal Mexican immigration were a reason the Eisenhower administration launched Operation Wetback, a military campaign to deport Latino undocumented workers en masse.

In the 1970s, in the aftermath of the civil rights movement, the AFL, merged with the CIO since 1955, still identified illegal immigration from Mexico as a major problem. However, instead of proposing mass deportations as in the past, it suggested the imposition of sanctions against employers that hired illegal aliens. This idea was attractive to liberal Congressmen in the House, who held hearings and proposed legislation on the subject. During that decade, nonetheless, the idea did not prosper, as

there was strong opposition from business. By the 1980s, sanctions were included in IRCA. By the end of the twentieth century, organized labor was still concerned about illegal immigration. However, in a major shift of policies, in 2000 the AFL-CIO called for a general amnesty for illegal immigrants already present in the United States and for the end of employer sanctions, since they "did not work" and promoted the abuse of workers by their employers[36].

2.3.5 Civic, Religious and Ethnic Organizations that Support Immigrants

Ethnic and civic organizations were important actors in the incorporation of European immigrants at the end of the nineteenth century. For those immigrants unable to participate in the political process, and for whose access to established institutions was fairly limited, civic organizations facilitated adaptation by providing services and know how. Furthermore, these organizations politicized immigrants, many times unexpectedly, by motivating them to organize and discuss their problems. One of the best-known organizations was the settlement house established by Jane Adams in Chicago. These types of institutions were effective in delivering specific benefits to immigrants. However, they went into decline as the state played a more active role beginning in the 1930s in providing welfare for the poor. Furthermore, since migration flows diminished, there were fewer immigrants to attend these organizations and their children, now Americanized, rejected places built by and for their parents (Bach 1992, p. 151).

Mexican immigrants who arrived in the United States when the doors were closed to other immigrant groups were not similarly protected by such organizations. The role of these organizations was already in decline by the time they arrived in large

[36] See: *All things Considered*, 02/17/00 at www.npr.org.

numbers. Most were located in urban areas and since a large part of Mexican migration was rural they did not have access to their services.

After the 1986 amnesty, however, civic and not-for-profit organizations supported the adaptation and assimilation of Mexican immigrants in the United States. They have a humanitarian and social justice agenda derived from the civil rights movement that converts them into important advocates for immigrant rights. They provide immigrants with many services including English lessons and legal advice. They also help them organize and provide the know how to access government institutions. Furthermore, they have also filed "numerous lawsuits on behalf of immigrants, legal or not, and have generally succeeded in defining immigration policy controversies as matters of constitutional interpretation rather than political choices" (Freeman and Betts 1992, p. 80). These organizations, thus, represent important channels of access to the opportunity structure of the receiving society.

Another source of protection and opportunity for Mexican immigrants comes from ethnic organizations, specifically those founded by Mexican-Americans or with the help of major foundations, which by the 1970s, in the aftermath of the civil rights movement, established offices in Washington, D.C. to defend the interests of American citizens of Mexican origin, but also to campaign in favor of immigrants' rights. Mexican-American organizations were a pivotal force in the support of the 1986 amnesty, even if they were originally opposed to it due to employer sanctions

Mexican-American organizations such as MALDEF have been critical to the enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, which has been an important step in helping immigrants incorporate. MALDEF and other Mexican-American organizations have also

been fundamental actors in opposing anti-immigrant measures such as Proposition 187 in California. Mexican-American organizations also provide immigrants with important resources such as leadership formation courses. However, the fact that these organizations have ceased doing major grass-root activities in the last couple of decades has diminished their direct contact with immigrant communities and their capacities to identify their needs. Even if native born Mexican-Americans and newly arrived Mexican immigrants do not always have a similar political agenda,[37] the groups need to collaborate in order to advance their interests in the United States.

2.4 Prevailing Elite Strategies/ Political Culture and Idioms

Despite the many ethnic groups that have arrived and live in the United States today, ethnic conflict has not been a major political challenge to the *status quo* as it has been in many other parts of the world. As Donald Horowitz has argued: "By world standards, the United States is a remarkably successful multiethnic society" (Horowitz 1985, p. 60); although this is also in part because world standards are "abysmally low." Horowitz identifies three important aspects that have helped contain ethnic conflict.

First, a federal system of government with dispersed power and decentralized institutions defuses many conflicts by playing them out on the local stage. In many other countries ethnic conflict has shaken the political system, because ethnic cleavages "tend to bifurcate the society at the national level of politics" (Horowitz 1985, p. 63). Second, ethnic parties are not a predominant form of electoral expression in the United States. Although ethnicity is a major topic in American politics the major American political parties do not represent any specific group, a situation that has fostered ethnic inclusion.

[37] As Leiken (2001) has explained, many leaders of first generation Mexican organizations are uncomfortable with the liberal agendas of both labor unions and mainstream Latino organizations.

Finally, within the United States there are no restrictions against the free movement of people and there are many incentives to move from one place to another. Because of this geographical mobility, there is less proclivity to group concentration than in other countries, a situation that has historically diminished the chances of specific ethnic groups claiming the control of one specific territory.

These three characteristics have also facilitated the incorporation of newcomers into the polity, although in some cases they have facilitated the subordination of some ethnic groups by others. For example, federalism helped the Jim Crow system to prevail for many years without becoming a major national conflict until the civil rights movement of the 1960s. As Horowitz has clarified, the civil rights movement gathered force despite, not because of federalism. Thanks to the federal system, and the fragmentation of power, nativist interests in Texas were able to extend the Jim Crow system to Mexicans as well as blacks. Federalism also meant that many of the obstacles Mexicans faced were products of local government. Since the issues Mexicans confront vary from place to place, it is difficult for them to assemble a coherent national alliance in favor of their interests.

The non-ethnic nature of American political parties implies that Mexican immigrants need to use a discourse that appeals to other groups within the mainstream society. It also means that they need to mobilize and organize to become part of dominant multiracial coalitions at different governmental levels. Since the United States has a winner take all electoral system, minority groups have difficulty winning elections unless they create alliances with other groups. So far there have been successful biracial

coalitions, mostly between blacks and white liberals. Latinos have played a secondary role in those coalitions.

Finally, geographical mobility benefits immigrants because they can move in search of better opportunities. In the last two decades Mexicans have left major cities of the southwest and Midwest to settle in non-traditional Mexican immigration areas. However, mobility also implies that their efforts to get their interests represented are dispersed.

2.5 Contingencies of Time and Place

2.5.1 Political Alignments and Immigrant Incorporation

The theory of political alignments posits that new policy regimes emerge from cyclical, radical shifts in the partisan alignments of voters in periods that range from 30 to 40 years. These shifts have taken place in critical elections in 1800, 1828, 1860, 1896 and 1932 (Burnham 1970). Each new political alignment has brought with it specific views about immigrants. For example, while the realignment of 1828 brought a vibrant political life in which newcomers were welcomed to participate (mostly immigrants from Northern Europe), the post 1896 configuration provided limited opportunities for recent immigrants (Southern and Eastern European). During the post 1828 configuration, American political parties where in a formative period and the political system was expanding to include new participants. The 1896 election marked, instead, a turning point towards disenfranchising large sectors of the population since mass political participation was perceived as a threat to the political and economic establishment. The main priorities after the post-1896 configuration and until the New Deal were economic growth, national integration, modernization and cultural assimilation. Efforts were thus made to

"Americanize" immigrants already present in the country, while the tendency was set towards closing the borders to new arrivals. Greater chances towards incorporating into the polity emerged for immigrants in the 1930s with the "New Deal" alignment. This alignment helped dismantle the Republican Party system that had predominated for three decades and facilitated the mobilization and gradual incorporation of immigrants through their participation in the labor movement and the Democratic Party.

The "New Deal" coalition persisted until the 1960s. After that the tendency has been more towards a dealignment from the party system, with a large sector of the voting age population abstaining. It is in this context that post-1965 immigrants are entering the polity. This is ironic: although incorporating Mexican immigrants face far fewer institutional barriers than previous generations of immigrants to participate in the political process thanks to decades of progressive civil and voting rights legislation, they are also entering the polity when politics are not perceived as a means to advance collective interests because traditional political institutions have declined. If anything, the last decade of the twentieth century has been marked by an ascendance of conservative interests, comparable to the ones that dominated American politics during the post-1896 arrangement. Even though these groups have not been able to build a winning majority that can sustain a long-term political alignment, they have effectively followed an incremental agenda that has as one of its main goals to dismantle civil and voting rights achieved by minorities after the civil rights movement. This means that new immigrants may lose important rights, before they are able to fully exercise them.

2.5.2 Divided Government and Unstable Majorities

The fact that neither the Republican nor the Democratic parties currently have a stable majority in national elections opens new possibilities for immigrant groups. The 2000 election returns, for example, revealed that 48.4% of Americans aligned with one party and 47.9% with the other. In 2004, 48% aligned with one party and 51% with the other party. Furthermore, although in 2006 Republicans controlled both Houses of Congress as well as the White House, a position not enjoyed since the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration, their control is marginal. After the 2002 mid-term elections Republicans held only 51 seats in the Senate and only 52.6% of the seats in the House. The nominally non-partisan Supreme Court is also narrowly divided, typically 5-4.

At the sub-national level, the stalemate is also evident: "Of the 5411 State Representatives nationwide, 51.8% are Democrats and slightly less than half are Republican" (Uresti 2004). Furthermore, Republicans occupy 26 of the governor's mansions, while Democrats occupy 24. Because of this situation the Democratic and Republican parties need to incorporate new voters. Even the Republican Party, which traditionally has tended to attack immigrants, has made an effort to contain its anti-immigrant constituency and to suggest policies popular with Latino voters such as President Bush's recent guest worker proposals.

In this context Mexican immigrants have much to gain if they are able to organize, mobilize and tie their demands to those of a larger, winning coalition. Periods of divided government or unstable majorities have provided, for instance, the right environment to implement sweeping immigration and civil rights reforms that are almost unthinkable when close majorities have prevailed (Costain 1994; Tichenor 2002).

2.6 Conclusions

This chapter has shown that Mexican immigrants confront important institutional barriers to incorporation, including the persistence of an ascriptive ideological view that considers them unfit to belong to the American polity and an institutional setting that creates few incentives for them to organize towards their host society. They also include the persistence of an immigration system shot through with contradictions. Nonetheless, there are also new windows of opportunity available to them, especially the newly acquired legal status bestowed by recent reforms. In addition, they now have important allies some of which were previously hostile to them.

With respect to the strategies that immigrants can adopt to advance their interests, they are now not only able to exercise their influence from outside of the system (interest group strategy), but from within the system (electoral strategy). Although Mexicans are still slow to naturalize and to vote, they are now gaining more attention from the two major political parties.

CHAPTER 3

FROM "*POCHOS*" TO HEROES: THE POLITICAL INCORPORATION OF THE MEXICAN DIASPORA INTO THEIR HOMELAND

3.1 Introduction

Mexico policy towards its expatriate community in the United States has changed remarkably over time. In the late nineteenth century and until the great deportation of Mexicans during the depression years, the Mexican government was considerably involved in the social, political and cultural life of émigrés in the United States (Santamaría Gómez 2001). Having a relatively small population, which declined as a result of the Revolution, Mexico also discouraged emigration since the entire population was needed to rebuild the country. Emigrants who went north, notwithstanding, and were perceived as adopting Anglo-Saxon values, were called *Pochos* and in the national imaginary they were considered almost traitors.

The somewhat close relationship established with the expatriate community during the first few revolutionary governments changed to a more distant one from the 1940s to the 1980s when the Mexican government turned inward, focused its energy on promoting economic development, and became suspicious of involvement in Mexico's political affairs by people living outside its national territory. During that period, the government recognized that it could not prevent emigration, even though the exploitation

of emigrants in the United States was seen as an offense to the national pride. Now that the population was growing at a rapid pace, emigration started to be seen and used as a safety valve to contain political conflict at home. For this reason, after negotiating the second guest worker program with the United States during World War Two, the Mexican government promoted the recruitment of *braceros* or laborers from Mexico's central plateau, a densely populated region with limited job opportunities (Corwin 1978). In this second period, the only explicit policy towards Mexicans abroad was to protect the rights of Mexican workers in the United States (both of *braceros* and undocumented immigrants) and to provide them with consular support. Since the government had a foreign policy doctrine of non-intervention in the political life of other countries (so as to avoid the intervention of other countries in Mexico's political life) it did not intervene in Mexican-Americans' struggles to gain political rights in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s.

Since the 1990s, the Mexican government has implemented a series of policies that differentiate among the various groups that compose the Mexican population in the United States. First, there have been policies aimed at improving relations with Mexican-Americans so that they become an important ally in Mexico's foreign policy agenda towards its northern neighbor. Second there have been policies targeted towards expatriates that have settled in the United States. Here the main goal has been to mobilize and organize them so that they participate more actively in the economic development of their places and country of origin. More recently, they have been granted political rights as well. Finally, the Mexican government has maintained its active policy of defending the rights of Mexican workers in the United States regardless of their legal status. This

goal acquired even greater priority when Vicente Fox became president in 2000. One of Fox's major foreign policy goals was to negotiate with the United States a program to regularize the status of undocumented Mexicans. Emigrants became so central to Fox's discourse that he even revalued their previous status in national rhetoric and called them "heroes".

The different interactions between the Mexican government and the Mexican community abroad over a century have provoked different responses from expatriates. From the beginning of the twentieth century to the mid 1930s Mexican émigrés were highly interested in Mexico's political developments, a stance that was encouraged by Mexico's political class, particularly by that which emerged from the Revolution. The limited interaction between the Mexican government and the Mexican community living in the USA after the 1940s discouraged any mobilization and claims-making focused on the homeland. This lack of mobilization was reinforced by the fact that Mexican emigration to the United States evolved from being political and economic in nature, to being mostly economic. Thus while emigrants from the beginning of the twentieth century came from different strata of the Mexican society most emigrants after the 1940s were young, male, and temporary laborers from the countryside, with limited education. By the 1980s the political democratization that was taking place in Mexico motivated émigrés to look back again to their homeland, a situation that was encouraged by opposition leaders from the left who courted the support of expatiates to advance their political agendas. The new policies implemented by the Mexican government in the 1990s towards Mexicans abroad encouraged the involvement of expatriates in Mexico's economic and political life. As was seen in Chapter 2, this situation was also facilitated

by the fact that many Mexicans had by then achieved a stable legal and economic status in the United States, and thus had the time and financial means to be involved in activities focused on their homeland.

This chapter traces the interactions between the Mexican state and the Mexican community in the United States. These interactions will be studied by using a political opportunity structure approach that considers how Mexico's different institutions and practices have motivated or inhibited the mobilization of Mexicans in the United States towards their home and host countries. The main point I want to stress is that political developments in Mexico and Mexican institutional practices towards Mexicans abroad have clearly influenced the ways in which Mexican immigrants have mobilized and organized themselves in the United States. They have shaped their political agendas towards both their home and host countries. For instance, the political mobilization of Mexicans in the United States has been expanding as new structures of opportunity are being opened up for them in their homeland. In this regard, to the extent that Mexicans in the United States have developed something close to a social movement[38] towards their homeland, and more recently towards their host country, their success has been determined by the recent institutional actions taken by the Mexican state towards Mexicans abroad. Many of these steps, intentionally or not, allowed the emergence of a political class within the Mexican community in the United States with an interest and a relative capacity to influence political events in their home and host countries.

[38] Here I follow the definition of social movement applied by Costain (1994) and Mcadam (1999). These authors define a social movement as "the actions of excluded groups to mobilize sufficient political leverage to advance their collective interests"(McAdam 1999, p. 37). Since these groups are political outsiders their agendas usually challenge the status quo and are perceived as a problem by many insiders. Another important thing is that "for a movement to emerge its followers must believe that problems have political roots and that they can do something to change existing conditions" (Costain 1994).

3.2 The Incorporation of Mexicans into Their Homeland Polity: A Political Opportunity Structure View

As demonstrated by research on transnationalism, emigrants tend to retain many emotional ties with their countries and places of origin that propel them to get involved in what happens there. However, these do not always translate into political action. Political developments in the homeland as well as its policies towards émigrés shape the possibilities for political activity. These opportunities and constraints also determine the extent to which the political agenda they articulate towards their country of origin will succeed.

Mexico has created a variety of incentives and obstacles relating to expatriate participation in Mexican political life. These have resulted from specific political events in Mexico, from the perceptions Mexican political elites have held about expatriates, and from the policies that have been implemented as a result of those perceptions. My analysis of the impact of Mexico on Mexican-American political life includes how emigrants have been incorporated into the idea of the Mexican nation (national cleavage structures); the channels that have been opened or closed by different institutional actors and legal arrangements for their participation in the political process (institutional actors and legal arrangements); the ways emigrants have been able to insert their demands within the political system (prevailing elite strategies/political culture and idioms); and, finally, specific events that have mobilized expatriates towards political developments back home (contingencies of time and place).

3.2.1 National Cleavage Structures.

The national cleavage structures that I am interested in are those that define the ideological spaces available for emigrants to articulate political demands towards their homeland. They include institutionalized debates about who belongs to the nation and who does not and how access to political membership has been historically constructed. With respect to Mexico they encompass the ways Mexican expatriates have been included within the highly nationalistic discourse used by Mexican institutions and political actors; as well as within the general notions of democracy and citizenship that have prevailed in that country.

3.2.1.1 The Mexican Nation and Mexicans Abroad

President Ernesto Zedillo declared at the outset of his presidency that the Mexican nation was not limited to the physical territory of the country. This was affirmed in his National Development Plan 1995-2000 in the chapter called "the Mexican nation." The new notion of the Mexican nation offered by Zedillo was the basis of the Congressional initiative that reformed Mexico's nationality laws in 1997. Taking effect in 1998, this measure allowed Mexicans to naturalize as citizens of another country while retaining their Mexican nationality. In practice, Mexican-Americans with at least one Mexican parent would keep or obtain important economic rights such as the acquisition of property in places restricted to Mexicans alone. Even if some Mexicans abroad considered the new nationality law unsatisfactory because it said nothing about the right to vote from abroad, Zedillo's redefinition of the nation, and his reform of the nationality laws, reflected a dramatic change in the notions that the Mexican state had had until then.

Since independence Mexico has been a strongly nationalistic country.

Nationalism served two purposes: first, establishing a new, cohesive country from a former Spanish colony; second, counterbalancing the constant threat to Mexico's sovereignty posed by European powers (for example, France imposed a puppet emperor in Mexico from 1861 to 1867) and the United States (which on two occasions invaded Mexican territory).

Although the Mexican population has never been homogeneous,[39] Mexican political authorities and intellectuals argued that Mexico was a nation-state integrated by a *mestizo* people, that is, people from a mix of European and indigenous ancestry. The political class that emerged from the Mexican Revolution enthusiastically embraced this conception. Concerned about unifying the country after years of war, this elite developed a nationalistic discourse that reinforced the notion of a *mestizo* state in which the various indigenous groups were gradually fused with one another and with a lesser number of Spanish (Castilian) people to form an undifferentiated whole. From this homogeneous whole, which José Vasconcelos famously called "the cosmic race ", the Mexican nation evolved and became coterminous with the state (Connor 1985, p. 13).

This discourse evidently excluded many groups from the idea of the nation. The large indigenous population of the country, for example, did not have a distinct space in this conception. Although the governments that emerged from the Revolution consistently exploited an idealized view about Mexico's pre-Hispanic cultures, the indigenous people that descended from those cultures were perceived as a problem from the point of view of national unification and economic advancement. As a result, many

[39] World Almanac figures describe the ethnic composition of the country as 60 percent *mestizo*, 10 percent European and 30 percent native-American see:
http://www.ivacation.com/ivhalmanac/almanac.asp?CityID=356

efforts were oriented towards their assimilation into the mainstream culture, to the detriment of their linguistic and cultural heritage.

Mexican emigrants were also excluded from the idea of the nation. However, the view of their role was ambiguous. On the one hand, the state has always shown a deep concern about the fate of those that emigrated to the United States in search of work. From 1900 until the 1930s[40] the government attempted, futilely, to discourage emigration, which was viewed as a drain of the national labor force. Even when Mexico agreed to the *bracero* programs of the 1940s and 1960s, which implied an acceptance by the government that emigration was unavoidable since the country could not provide all of its population with economic opportunity, Mexican authorities followed a policy of discouraging emigration by advising of the risks of going north.

On the other hand, those emigrating north were viewed critically and in many occasions they were portrayed as disloyal. Mexican intellectuals and politicians were suspicious of emigrants who adopted "American values". Only a limited number of Mexicans had the chance of fully integrating into American society. Nonetheless, those Mexicans who established themselves in the United States, even if their integration was partial, were despised because they were thought to have adopted English terminologies and American values to the detriment of their Spanish language and Mexican heritage. This critical attitude grew in part out of the fact that a main element of Mexican nationalism was anti-Americanism, a product of the constant threat that the United States

[40] Probably the most effective policy to discourage emigration would have been strict controls at the Mexican border. However, the Mexican government never attempted to follow such a policy because as Corwin points out, since the early revolutionary regimes of Carranza, De la Huerta, Obregón and Calles, an open border was considered as a necessary "escape valve" for revolutionary unrest and political enemies. Furthermore, since then political authorities were painfully aware that "Mexico had little to offer miserable peons and underpaid industrial and mine workers, except unfulfilled revolutionary promises" (Corwin 1978, p. 178).

was perceived to represent for Mexico. Therefore, anyone perceived as embracing the American culture was viewed with scorn.

By the mid-1950s negative attitudes were extended to poor laborers or *mojados* whom Mexican authorities had usually treated as innocent victims of unfortunate circumstances. A specific event contributed to this. Mexican officials closed several entry points on the border with California in January 1954 with the goal of preventing employers from recruiting *braceros* without meeting Mexican conditions spelled out in the *bracero* convention of August 2, 1951. This provoked aspiring *braceros* to fight the "Mexican police and border guards in an effort to cross over and sign up with waiting contractors" (Corwin 1978, p. 186).

The spectacle of Mexicans against Mexicans, which was graphically registered by the national press, shocked not only Mexican authorities but also the public. Increasingly thereafter, emigrants were seen less as "humble *campesinos* driven involuntarily into the jaws of Anglo capitalists" (Corwin 1978, p. 186) and more as laborers who allowed themselves to be exploited by American employers.

In the mid 1980s when a large number of émigrés were granted legal status in the United States, Mexican authorities slowly realized that the situation of expatriates in that country was being transformed. First, many of the newly legalized would certainly settle permanently in the United States and bring their families with them, diminishing their direct ties to Mexico. Second, living conditions would improve with legal status and facilitate adaptation to American society. Their loyalty to Mexico, and the remittances they sent, therefore, could not be taken for granted anymore. A new policy towards expatriates was needed. Emigrants could not be regarded simply as victims of Anglo

employers, even if many would not be able to regularize their immigration status and would thus continue to endure substandard working conditions. Emigrants could no longer be perceived as traitors, or as people who abandoned their heritage, because most of them had maintained a strong sense of Mexican identity.

At the policy level, however, major changes towards expatriates did not take place until 1990 when the government of Carlos Salinas de Gortari institutionalized the relationship between the state and Mexicans abroad by creating the Program for Mexican Communities Abroad within the Ministry of Foreign Relations[41]. Major changes in the general conception about Mexicans abroad, and their role in the Mexican nation, however, had to wait a little longer. During the Salinas administration, the major elements of Mexican nationalism were in crisis or no longer represented the national reality. Among other things, it became more evident than ever that Mexico was not a *mestizo* state but a multiethnic state in which the interests of the indigenous population and other minorities had to be taken into account. The 1994 upraising in Chiapas demonstrated the failure of those policies attempting to incorporate the indigenous population into the mainstream society and culture without recognizing the importance of their culture and languages as well as their economic needs.

The Salinas administration was also a period in which the traditional anti-Americanism of the Mexican political system abated. The deep economic crises of the 1980s showed that Mexico could not develop economically by applying only inward looking policies, but needed to integrate itself into the world economy. The solution

[41] Expatriates support to Salinas opponent Cuahutémoc Cárdenas during the Presidential elections of 1988, certainly convinced Mexican authorities of the need to redefine and control the relationship with the Mexican community abroad. Furthermore, Mexican authorities also became conscious that it was very important to establish a positive and long term relationship with Mexican-Americans to advance Mexico's strategic interests towards the United States.

offered by the Salinas government was to look for a rapprochement with the United States. These pressures facilitated the reformulation of the idea of the nation introduced in 1995 by Ernesto Zedillo, Salina's successor.

Zedillo's reformulation of the idea of the nation as well as reforms in the nationality laws that were approved in 1996 implied that Mexico no longer expected emigrants to return, but recognized that they could be both Mexican and members of American society. This became a major goal of Zedillo's policy towards Mexicans abroad. The approval of Proposition 187 in California seemed to demonstrate that the best way for the Mexican government to defend Mexicans abroad was to motivate them to become American citizens so that they could defend themselves.

In 2000 President Fox, Zedillo's successor, went beyond Zedillo's ideas by arguing that Mexican emigrants were not only members of the Mexican nation but also national heroes. Two days after his inauguration, on December 3, 2000, Fox hosted a special reception for Mexicans abroad that included a broad delegation of both well-known Mexican-Americans and successful expatriates. At this unprecedented event he vowed that he would govern "for 118 million Mexicans" –the 100 million in Mexico and the 18 million people of Mexican descent in the United States (Smith 2000). His comments created confusion and skepticism among Mexican-Americans as well as political pundits in Mexico and the United States. While Zedillo's argument that the Mexican nation extended beyond the Mexican borders was mostly a symbolic gesture that attempted to reconcile Mexico with its émigrés and with Mexican-Americans, Fox's goal of governing those Mexicans who resided outside Mexico's territory brought with it a complex political content that was difficult to digest. Fox was probably trying to say

that he wanted to be accountable to Mexicans abroad as he was to Mexicans within the national territory, but his ill-fated suggestion raised many troublesome questions: how could he govern for a group of people that did not vote for him? How could he govern a specific population within the territory of another sovereign country? How could he be accountable to them? Could they be expected to comply with Mexico's law? Despite these doubts, Fox's discourse, as well as Zedillo's reformulation, certainly opened new opportunities for the mobilization of Mexican expatriates in the United States, since they now had a legitimate claim on Mexico's destiny.

3.2.1.2 Citizenship, Democratization, and the Incorporation of Emigrants Into Mexico's Polity

During the 1990s and until 2005 one of the main goals of Mexican emigrants to the United States was the acquisition of political rights in their homeland. This type of demand did not emerge exclusively within the Mexican expatriate community. Other emigrant groups have made similar demands in the last few years, including Dominicans, Haitians, Colombians, Ecuadorians, Indians, Turks and many others. Even though these claims had become common at the end of the twentieth century, the Mexican case is still striking. Before the 1980s, Mexican emigrants would not have demanded political rights in their homeland for the simple reason that, strictly speaking, these rights were not yet available to many Mexicans residing in Mexico. The expatriate demand for political rights can be linked, therefore, to the structures of opportunities that have been opened by Mexico's democratization process and by its changing notions of citizenship.

3.2.1.3 Political Rights: An Old Demand?

Santamaría Gómez has argued that the expatriate's desire to vote from abroad is very old. In 1929 a group of Mexican émigrés raised this issue with José Vasconcelos, then a candidate for Mexico's presidency (Santamaría Gómez 2001). The plea, however, had not the remotest chance of being considered because the democratic rights that these émigrés were seeking were not relevant in Mexico at that time. For instance, that same year Vasconcelos was forced into a long political exile in the United States when his opponent, Pascual Ortiz Rubio, was elected as the candidate of the party that eventually became the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). After that election, the PRI consolidated its control of Mexico's political life for more than sixty years. Although elections were held every six years, they were not competitive and did not determine Mexico's political destiny. This situation guaranteed that no such demands from expatriates would emerge until 1988 when Mexican elections became meaningful again. For this reason, it is possible to argue that the demand to vote from abroad articulated in the last two decades does not represent a continuation of the old demand. They are not really connected because they emerged in different contexts and under different circumstances.

The expatriates' demand to vote form abroad can be traced, in contrast, to Mexico's recent democratization process and the struggles of many sectors of the Mexican population to acquire effective political rights. These struggles emerged at the end of the 1960s with the student movement, but became more prominent during the 1970s and 1980s. During those years one aspect of citizenship as described by Marshall (1992), the political, became more prominent in Mexican debates than ever before.

Scholars, intellectuals, and leaders from the opposition all argued for an opening in the political system and the inclusion of a greater proportion of the population who were deprived of real citizenship rights because their votes were controlled and electoral competition did not really exist. Citizenship in Mexico was thus only linked to the notion of democracy in the 1970s and 1980s. Prior to those decades, the notion of citizenship was not really connected to political rights in the national debate (although it was in the Constitution) but rather to social and civil rights.

Since the Mexican revolution had a powerful social content, the 1917 Constitution that resulted from it strongly emphasized social entitlements and liberal rights that would be advanced through the consolidation of post-revolutionary institutional arrangements around the corporatist state and an ambitious agrarian reform (Domingo 1999). The Mexican constitution was arguably one of the most progressive charters in the world when it was written. Article 123, for example, gave workers the right to organize and to strike against employers, while in article 3, the state assumed the responsibility of educating every child through elementary school. Furthermore, article 27, which talked about land redistribution to the poor, was the basis of one of the most ambitious, if in the end not fully successful, agrarian reforms ever implemented in Latin America.

All these goals established by the Constitution gave the political regime that emerged from the Revolution a legitimacy to act on behalf of the different social sectors integrated in its corporatist structure even though it lacked democratic legitimacy obtained through electoral processes. For many years, social justice framed the idea of citizenship, and was the major promise in governmental discourses. By 1982, when the "Mexican miracle" stop producing economic growth and the country entered into a deep

economic crisis, the goal of social justice got somewhat lost as the state no longer had the necessary resources to reproduce its corporatist and clientelist alliances with different sectors of society. In this moment the notion of democratic rights started finally to become the core idea of citizenship. From then on, the national debate centered on opening the political system to include formerly excluded actors and political parties, a situation that was facilitated by electoral reforms implemented in 1977 with the goal of permitting a viable opposition[42]. Young people, the middle class, and urban groups, even if not well organized, called for a greater voice in the polity. By the late 1980s early 1990s, this same agenda had been adopted by emigrant organizations that represented a sector of the population historically excluded not only from the polity but also from national development projects.

The event that marked a turning point in the way Mexicans abroad related to the Mexican political system was the 1988 election. Until then, expatriates had not articulated any specific political demand towards the Mexican state. Although a few years earlier there were attempts by Chicano political activists to organize the Mexican community in the United States around a demand for democracy in Mexico, they were not very successful, probably because they centered on an abstract agenda (Dresser 1993). The political campaign that preceded the 1988 presidential election gave them, in contrast, a concrete political agenda: to participate in Mexico's democratization process by helping Cuahtémoc Cárdenas, the candidate of the *Frente Cardenista* or Cardenista Front, to win the presidential elections against Carlos Salinas, the PRI candidate. Visits

[42] The electoral reforms of 1977 had the goal of facilitating the representation in Congress of opposition political parties. These reforms were implemented after the elections of 1976, when the PRI presidential candidate did not have any competition for the presidency, a situation that marked a major political crisis for the PRI since it showed how meaningless were Mexican elections. In practice this elections facilitated the creation of Mexico's modern party system.

by Cardenas to California during his campaign helped mobilize expatriates who formed various groups to support him. Expatriates supported the *Frente Cardenista* because they saw in it a sign of political change in Mexico; specifically, the possibility of participating in Mexico's political life as individuals and not through the mediation of corporativist institutions[43].

Those who mobilized in favor of Cárdenas belonged to a sector of dissatisfied expatriates that had emigrated in the 1980s as a result of Mexico's economic crises and had a profile different from the one that had characterized Mexican emigrants of previous decades (Dresser 1993, p. 99). This sector included electricians, mechanics and people with higher levels of education, many of whom were already politically active in Mexico through their participation in unions and student or professional organizations. In other cases members of this group had acquired some political experience in the United States through participation in pro-immigrant and labor rights organizations [44]. A large number of the members of this sector had achieved a stable legal and socio-economic status in the United States that facilitated their participation in political causes. This sector was not organized prior to 1988. Cárdenas' political campaign, however, and later on the relationship they built with the Party of the Democratic Revolution which succeeded the *Frente Cardenista*, finally gave them concrete reasons to organize and to articulate new demands of the Mexican state. By the 2000 election people within this sector also provided important support from the United States for Fox's campaign for the presidency.

[43] Author interview with Carlos Olamendi, October 11, 2001 in Orange County, California.
[44] This information is corroborated in the individual profiles of those that supported Cárdenas described by Martinez Saldaña (2002, p. 215-218).

3.2.2. Institutional actors and legal arrangements

Institutions and legal arrangements in the home country determine the channels of access for emigrants. These include availability of citizenship rights for expatriates, specifically political rights such as the right to vote and to hold political office. They include the relationships of emigrants with their homeland state institutions and political actors such as the executive and legislature at the national and local levels, the electoral authorities, and political parties. In addition they include debates about centralism and federalism as well as the ways in which the dismantling of the developmental institutions of the state has transformed the relationship between émigrés and the Mexican state.

3.2.2.1 Mexican Citizenship and the Incorporation of Mexicans abroad

The ways citizenship has been structured in Mexico's constitutional and legal arrangements has clearly determined the type of political mobilization that emigrants have articulated towards their homeland, as well as the extent to which they have been able to assert political influence in their country of origin.

As was seen in the previous section, the acceptance of emigrants and Mexican-Americans as members of the Mexican nation did not imply their access to full citizenship rights. When reforming the nationality laws to allow dual nationality, Mexican authorities were particularly careful to differentiate between nationality and citizenship, a distinction that already existed under Mexican law. As Becerra Ramírez has pointed out, under Mexico's constitutional law nationality is a broader concept that binds an individual to the Mexican state; citizenship, in contrast, is one aspect of nationality that "signifies the eligibility of nationals to participate in governance through the right to vote and hold office" (Becerra Ramírez 2000, p. 314).

When the Zedillo administration devised the idea of reforming Mexican nationality laws to allow dual nationality, his administration had the goal of facilitating the naturalization in the United States of Mexicans who were eligible for U.S. citizenship but did not obtain it due to fear of losing their Mexican nationality (and with it some economic rights in Mexico such as their property rights in communal lands or *ejidos*). In addition, the reform had two additional goals: gaining back the loyalty of those Mexicans who had naturalized already as American citizens by allowing them to recover their Mexican nationality; and cultivating the loyalty of Mexican-Americans by giving them the right of obtaining Mexican nationality and with it the possibility of acquiring property in places restricted to Mexicans[45]. The universe of this reform was thus clearly limited to Mexicans who had already acquired United States citizenship or were in a position to acquire it, and to Mexican-Americans, that is people of Mexican descent born in the United States. For this reason Mexican authorities did not consult the general Mexican community in the United States about their views but only Mexican-American organizations, and a few first-generation Mexican organizations (Santamaría Gómez 2001).

Although Zedillo demonstrated commitment to grant Mexicans abroad a new status within the nation, his administration was consistently opposed to granting citizenship rights to expatriates[46], a demand that had emerged since 1988 within Mexican communities abroad and was being supported by the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). The Zedillo administration perceived this issue as complex and as one that would

[45] For a similar but broader description of these goals see de la Garza (1997).
[46] In 1998, however, during a visit to California, Zedillo declared that he was not opposed to the right to vote from abroad, "a thing that opened for us the hope that we would be able to exercise that right for the 2000 presidential elections." Author's Interview with Carlos Olamendi, October 11, 2001.

galvanize a lot of opposition inside his own party and from other sectors of the country's political and intellectual community. His government's opposition to voting rights for expatriates had many bases. First, it was widely assumed by his government and many members of the PRI that if elections were conducted among the Mexican community in the United States, they would be lost to the opposition[47] because the vote from abroad would be punitively directed against the PRI. Even though the government apparently conducted a survey that showed that the electoral preferences of Mexicans abroad were no different from those of Mexicans in Mexico[48], there was widespread concern that emigrants would vote against the PRI. Second, there was a technical issue: the implementation of an electoral process abroad would be expensive and challenging considering the large number of Mexicans living in the United States, their distribution across the territory, and the difficulty of estimating their exact numbers since many of them were undocumented. A related consideration was that there were also doubts that Mexico's electoral laws could be effectively implemented and enforced beyond Mexico's territory, a situation that would limit the legitimacy of the electoral results from outside the country. Third, there was a nationalistic concern. Granting political rights was seen as possibly affecting Mexico's sovereignty since the number of potential voters abroad was huge as compared to other countries that allowed emigrants to vote. Thus they had the capacity of deciding elections without residing permanently in Mexico and, therefore, without having to face directly the consequences of their electoral decisions[49]. This

[47] Ross Pineda has argued that in private conversations with PRI Congressmen they expressed that fear (Ross Pineda 2000).

[48] This survey was mentioned to Raúl Ross Pineada in personal conversations with the presidential adviser José Luis Barros Horcasitas (Ross Pineda 2000).

[49] Many of these concerns, particularly those regarding the challenges to Mexico's sovereignty that the new relationship with Mexicans abroad would imply were already present since the reforms to the

concern grew once the dual nationality laws were implemented in 1998 since American citizens would now have the right to vote and possibly decide electoral outcomes[50]. Finally, there was a foreign policy dimension. Mexican authorities were well aware that to implement an electoral process of the size and magnitude of the one Mexico would have to conduct in the United States would require the collaboration of American authorities at the national and local level. This certainly would require the negotiation of some kind of agreements for which Mexico would have to pay a price in detriment to other foreign policy goals with that country (Zárate 2004). In addition, there was also the fear of how American authorities and American public opinion would react to a Mexican election conducted on US soil. Would immigration authorities detain undocumented emigrants when they went to vote? Would American public opinion turn against naturalized Mexican immigrants by questioning their loyalty to the United States?

Many of these questions had no direct answers until some serious research was conducted or until electoral processes were actually implemented beyond Mexico's territory. Despite this, the movement in favor of granting emigrants the right to vote from abroad continued to gain strength[51]. In the context of a vital democratization process, the emigrants' demand to vote from abroad was evaluated as a "historical debt" Mexico's

---

nationality laws were designed and discussed. For instance, to avoid the existence of a large pool of American citizens that could have an inference in Mexico's affairs over the years, the nationality laws were designed in such a way that Mexican nationality could not be transmitted by the *jus sanguinis* system for over a generation. The previous law allowed for the indefinite transmission of Mexican nationality to overseas generations, provided that members of the first generation did not naturalize as citizens of another country (Aleinikoff 2000; Becerra Ramírez 2000).

[50] This concern was expressed by many members of Zedillo's administration and was clearly articulated by respected judicial analysts such as Jorge Carpizo and Diego Valadez (Carpizo 1999; Valadéz 1999).

[51] As will be seen later on, the first political party to take as part of its agenda promoting the right to vote from abroad was the PRD. For almost all the 1990s this was the only party that officially supported this cause. The PRI in contrast was completely against, while the National Action Party (PAN) assumed a neutral position. By the next decade in a context of increased political competition all three political parties were advocating in favor of granting the right to vote from abroad. For arguments by Mexican scholars in favor of the right to vote (Silva-Herzog Márquez 1998; Calderon Chelius and Martinez Saldaña 2002; Zárate 2004).

democracy owed them (Zárate 2004). Mexican emigrants, they argued, did not leave the country voluntarily but as a result of years of authoritarian rule and disastrous policy making. Mexico's democratization process could not, therefore, be completed until they were incorporated into the political system.

Notwithstanding Zedillo's opposition, his administration tacitly approved the concept in April 1996 by signing as a witness of honor the "Bucareli Table" accords in which Mexican political parties and authorities agreed to reform Article 36 of the Constitution to facilitate the vote in presidential elections outside of Mexico's territory. The reform, which was finally approved in Congress on July 31st of the same year, included the elimination of the requirement to vote in specific electoral districts for presidential elections. This would permit voting in any jurisdiction within or beyond Mexico's territory. This was not the main subject of the "Bucareli table" accords. The government's main goal in these negotiations was to approve definitive reforms to the Federal Code for Electoral Procedures and Institutions (COFIPE) that would guide Mexico's electoral processes from 1997 onwards. These negotiations were particularly difficult. When the time came to sign the main commitments one of the three main political parties in Mexico, the National Action Party (PAN), left the negotiation table as a protest against the government on issues not related with these reforms. Thus, the other two main political parties, the PRD and the PRI, stayed alone to finish the process. With the goal of keeping the PRD involved in the negotiations, the PRI accepted many PRD demands that under different conditions it would certainly have rejected including that of allowing the constitutional amendments to article 36 (Ross Pineda 2000).

The last point of the agreement as well as the subsequent reforms that allowed voting from abroad in presidential elections, passed, curiously enough, almost without public notice in Mexico.[52] At the moment, the main news was the unprecedented changes that were to be implemented to the COFIPE, the most important of which was that the government agreed to hand over to civil society the complete control and implementation of Mexico's electoral institutions and processes. This change was considered a crucial step in Mexico's democratization process and one that would certainly have lasting consequences. There was not, therefore, a national debate over whether émigrés should vote in Mexico's national elections and the subject was left unresolved because no procedure or legal framework was designed for its implementation. However, the reform to the Constitution did help mobilize Mexican political activists abroad, who now concentrated their energy on lobbying the authorities who could influence the further elaboration of the law. These included, specifically, the Federal Electoral Institute and Congress. Activists argued that the question was no longer whether Mexicans abroad should vote in Mexico's elections, because that was now guaranteed by the Constitution[53], but how to make it happen.

On November 22nd 1996 a large package of changes to the COFIPE was finally approved. Within this package was a reform that had the apparent purpose of legislating the right to vote from abroad. However, the topic was considered so difficult and conflictive, that the reform actually delayed the possibility of implementing it, by

[52] Jorge Carpizo a major constitutional scholar and one of the main opponents of the reform expressed the following on the subject: "Incredible! Incredible! And one thousand times incredible! The most important political issue in Mexico's life in the last fifty years and it passed almost clandestinely through the legislative power (Carpizo 1999, p. 89) (translation is mine)."

[53] It is important to point out that the reform to article 36th of the Constitution did not make any explicit reference to the right to vote from abroad. It only opened its viability by eliminating the requirement that people had to vote for presidential elections in their respective district.

conditioning the elaboration of the necessary law 1) on the integration of the National Citizen Registry (RENACI), which would provide identity cards for all Mexicans, including those living abroad, and 2) on the establishment of a commission of specialists by the General Counsel of the National Electoral Institute that would conduct a study on the viability of implementing presidential elections abroad (Ross Pineda 2000).

Because of the confusion created by this article, nothing happened for more than a year. The compilation of the National Citizen Registry was supposed to be done by the Interior Minister, but it could take a long time and the ministry was not doing anything in this respect, anyway. Additionally, it was not clear whether the commission of specialists could be established prior to the completion of the registry or after. One of the counselors of the Federal Electoral Institute[54] (IFE) with close connections to political activists abroad, Juan Molinar Horcasitas, argued that since the original goal of the COFIPE reform was to grant the Mexican community abroad the right to vote, and the integration of the Renaci was only a means of achieving that goal, then if that became an obstacle it should be put aside.

On April 29, 1998 the IFE's General Counsel approved the formation of a specialists' commission to study the subject.[55] The commission included 13 specialists from different academic disciplines. After six months they presented a long report in which they provided responses to the concerns expressed by members of the Zedillo administration and at the same time argued that the implementation of the 2000 presidential elections abroad was viable and that there was no judicial, economic, or

[54] 9 counselors with voice and vote that belong to the civil society take the decisions within the Federal Electoral Institute.
[55] On April 24th of that same year Mexico's interior minister recognized that the government had not the capacity to integrate the Renaci prior to the 2000 elections.

logistic condition that could deny the right to vote to Mexicans abroad. It also did not see any international obstacles to the vote (IFE 1998).

The fact that the report was written by specialists without specific connections to any political party increased the legitimacy of the movement for voting rights from abroad. It also showed Mexican political leaders in the United States that the privilege might be obtained in the near future if they lobbied effectively. What had seemed in the early 1990s as an unrealizable dream was becoming a real possibility. In a mere few years Mexicans abroad were revalorized in national rhetoric and were allowed to keep or recover their Mexican nationality and with it important economic rights; the Constitution was no longer an obstacle to obtaining the vote from abroad because article 36 was changed with that goal in mind. Finally, there was a study commissioned by probably the most prestigious Mexican institution at the moment, the IFE[56], and conducted by independent specialists, arguing that there were no legitimate reasons to deny Mexicans abroad the right to vote. It was now the turn of the Mexican Congress to specify how this right could be implemented.

Political parties that had been sharply divided in Congress found that after the report it was difficult to openly oppose the right to vote from abroad, even if they still may have had legitimate doubts[57]. The PRD was already openly in favor. Other political parties, however, had not taken positions prior to the report. After it was released, the

[56] In the late 1990s the IFE became a highly respected institution because of its independence from the government, acquired after the reforms to the COFIPE, at a time when many other state institutions were seen as dominated by an executive that represented still represented remnants of Mexico's authoritarian history.

[57] The three main political parties have had different doubts about granting the right to vote to Mexicans abroad. Personal interviews with officials from the PRD and the PAN reveled that there have been constant doubts within those parties about what impact Mexicans abroad would have within their own structures as well as for Mexico's general political process. This issue will be discussed further in the next section of this chapter.

PAN, which originally assumed a neutral position on the subject and had expressed some technical concerns about its viability, finally took a favorable position. The same occurred with Mexico's smaller political parties. In the next year, members of the various opposition parties would introduce initiatives in the Congress seeking to clarify and advance the political rights of Mexicans abroad. None of these initiatives were approved due in great part to opposition from the PRI [58].

For the PRI the situation became complicated. Many of the reasons presented by the party and the government to oppose granting emigrants the right to vote from abroad were publicly questioned by the specialists. One of the main problems created by the report, however, was that it argued that it was feasible to implement voting from abroad for the 2000 presidential election The party knew that these elections would be the most competitive it had ever confronted, and incorporating into the process a new constituency whose political behavior was yet unknown further complicated the situation for them. Furthermore, there were still highly nationalistic groups within the party that blatantly opposed granting political rights to expatriates since that could threaten Mexico's sovereignty.

There were, however, some members for whom it became clear that opposing this initiative might further galvanize Mexicans abroad against the party, with negative consequences for its candidates at the local and national level[59]. On many occasions expatriates had appeared to influence the selection of candidates and the political

[58] To see a good review of all the initiatives that have been introduced in the Mexican congress about the right to vote from abroad check the table "*Agenda Legislativa en material Electoral de Voto de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero*" on the IFE website: http:// www.ife.org.

[59] Members of the party from states that produce emigrants have had this picture clear for a long time. This is clearly the case of Senator Genaro Borrego, whom has been cultivating a strong relationship with emigrants since he was the governor of Zacatecas.

preferences of family members and communities of origin even if they were not yet able to vote. Furthermore, it was no secret that they could represent an important source of campaign funding, even if that was illegal under Mexico's electoral law (Hughes 1993).

Although the party had been cultivating a relationship with Mexicans abroad since at least the beginning of the 1990s through governmental policies and the creation of political committees in different cities (Dresser 1993; Hughes 1993), fear of the unknown consequences for the party and the country of granting emigrants the right to vote was substantial. For this reason, on July 8th, 1999 the Mexican Senate, still dominated by the PRI, voted against an initiative proposed originally by the PAN and approved already in the lower house of Congress on April 29th that would have allowed Mexicans abroad holding a voting identification card to vote in the 2000 elections. Although this initiative was considered quite modest by the advocates of the cause, and would have created a limited number of potential voters, the PRI was not yet ready to accept it.

The party's attitude changed after the 2000 presidential elections. Although many members may still have had doubts about the wisdom of granting political rights to emigrants, few were willing to express them openly. The support that the campaign of Fox received from Mexicans abroad, both financially and politically, made it clearer than even though emigrants could not vote they were already important political actors that had to be taken into consideration. Both the PRD in 1988 and the PAN in 2000 had assiduously and effectively cultivated the support of Mexicans living in the United States for their presidential candidates. The PRI was now willing to take advantage of that

support as well, as was reflected in the fact that many members of the party became major advocates of granting political rights to expatriates[60].

3.2.2.2 Citizenship after the 2000 Presidential Elections

Since the 2000 presidential elections no political force in Mexico has been openly opposed to granting political rights to emigrants, such an attitude becoming "politically incorrect". If anything, politicians and analysts were arguing that the procedures to finally implement Mexico's electoral processes abroad would have to be thought out with care, so that Mexico's sovereignty would not be affected (Gomez Mena 2004). During 2003 and 2004 Mexicans abroad obtained unprecedented attention from Mexican officials. Senators, deputies, executive officials at the national and local level, IFE counselors, and leaders of political parties not only received the many delegations that emigrants sent to Mexico to lobby for the vote, but they also visited various Mexicans communities in the United States and made promises that they would fight for their cause[61].

On February 22nd, 2005, in a context in which all political parties were looking ahead to the 2006 presidential elections, and in which the relevance of the expatriate vote was magnified (one estimate was that at least four million Mexicans abroad held voting registration cards (Medrano 2005)) political parties in the Chamber of Deputies approved with almost complete unanimity a new bill that granted expatriates the right to vote in

[60] See as examples the following newspaper articles (Cardenas 2002; Irizar 2002; Ochoa 2002; Ochoa 2003).

[61] In a meting I attended for this research in October 2003 in the Mexican Consulate in New York City the PRI governor of Oaxaca, José Murat told Mexican leaders in the area that he not only supported the right to vote from abroad, but also the creation of a sixth circumscription that would that allow Mexicans abroad to be elected to the Mexican Congress. Curiously enough, this last demand had not yet been clearly articulated within the Mexican community in the area (this demand had been mostly articulated from Chicago and Los Angeles). In other words, the governor was mobilizing them towards goals that went beyond their political expectations towards Mexico.

presidential elections. This law contemplated the implementation of the electoral process abroad in terms similar to elections in Mexico. Political parties would be free to campaign everywhere and voters could use voter registration cards issued and ballot boxes installed where voters resided.

The approval of this bill produced many reactions. For the first time the Mexican public became aware of the potential impact of expatriates on Mexico's political life. Many analysts called it irresponsible and in the Senate, where the bill next went, various members declared that they would not approve it in its current form. In the end, the Senate modified the bill and on July 1, 2005 a new version with many limitations was approved again in the Chamber of deputies. This law finally granted expatriates the right to vote in presidential elections, but only through mail. In addition only those that had voter identification cards issued in Mexico and that expressed in advanced an interest to participate in the election would be able to vote, a condition that effectively excluded those expatriates that could not travel to Mexico on the specified dates to obtain it. These limits imposed for the participation of expatriates had probably the implicit goal of reducing the size of the potential electorate and thus diminishing the effects of émigré enfranchisement on Mexico's political stability. However, by establishing negative incentives for the participation of emigrants in the electoral process the new law also lost a large part of its democratic appeal, which had been its main justification in the first place[62].

[62] As Bauböck has explained, temporary absentees and emigrants who are allowed to vote in their country of origin do not in fact enjoy exactly the same franchise as domestic residents, because voting from abroad creates many hurdles that a citizen in its own country does not have to face, such as having to go to the closest consulate or express in advance his or her interest to vote. This situation creates a process of self-selection, which separates those expatriates with the greatest interest in their homeland (those who usually do everything to vote) from those with the less interest to participate there (those who would not incur any cost). In this scenario the participation of expatriates in their homeland's political life becomes more

Despite this fact, the law allowed Mexicans residing abroad to have access to dual citizenship rights, even if in the perspective of many activists they were not full citizenship rights. For this reason, the approval of the law can be considered historic and demonstrates not only the increasing level of receptiveness towards emigrants of the Mexican political system but also the growing political influence that they have acquired in their homeland in the last decade.

3.2.2.3 The Policy Process and the Incorporation of Expatriates

During the nineteenth century, the Mexican state had limited control of its northern frontier. Since the country was still struggling with state formation and national integration, events that took place in its Northern territories, which were far away and had a small population, "remained little more than afterthoughts" (Gutiérrez 1999, p. 484). When the United States annexed Mexico's Northern territories in 1848, there was some concern about the future of those Mexicans that were left behind. For this reason the Mexican government attempted to negotiate the best terms for them with the American government when giving up the territories and allowed them to keep their Mexican nationality. After that, however, there was not much involvement on the part of the Mexican authorities in their future. During that period and until the first decade of the twentieth century, those Mexicans that remained behind as well as their descendents struggled to adapt to their particular situation in their new country and developed a new

---

justifiable within a theory of Republican citizenship, because those that participate tend to have greater stakes there (Bauböck 2005a). The Mexican case, however, is more complex because a large share of the Mexican emigrant population leaves the country without documents and resides illegally in the receiving country. This means that many of them do not probably carry voter identification cards issued in Mexico, which are a requirement for their participation. In this regard, the obstacles established by the law to the participation of émigrés will certainly have the effect of cutting the participation of emigrants across social classes. Those that are better off and have a legal status have greater chances of participating than those that reside illegally in the United States. Because to a great extent the extension of political rights to émigrés has been justified by Mexican authorities as an attempt to include those persons that left the country due to lack of economic opportunities in Mexico, the democratic legitimacy of the extension is reduced.

identity highly determined by their particular circumstances. These circumstances were characterized by a widespread discrimination from the American society because of their Mexican origin. Therefore, except for a white elite which was able to easily integrate into the American society through intermarriage and other means, most of them were segregated in *barrios* and rural-colonies where they spoke Spanish, and continue to practice their family customs (Gutiérrez 1999).

On the eve of the Mexican Revolution many Mexicans migrated north, substantially changing the composition of the Mexican population in the United States. From that period and until the mid-1930s Mexican émigrés and people of Mexican origin that were already living in the United States were highly involved in Mexico's political developments. This was related to the fact that Mexican politics at the time were not only played in Mexico's territory but also north of the border, among other reasons because many emigrants had left the country for political reasons. Dissent against the authoritarian government of Porfirio Díaz was initially expressed from Texas, where many of his political enemies had taken refuge. From there too Francisco I. Madero promulgated the *Plan de San Luis*, which called for insurrection against the Díaz regime and marked the initiation of the Mexican Revolution.

During the Revolutionary period, there was even more Mexican emigration to the United States representing different political and social extractions from the Mexican society. From there they followed the conflict, which on many occasions was extended inside American territory, since many military factions crossed the border to get armaments and financial support from expatriates. The latter not only provided the revolutionaries with financial resources, they also recruited troops, engaged in espionage,

distributed propaganda, and lobbied the American government to recognize the different governments emerging from the Revolution. This support for the Revolution came from both Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. Those opposed to the Revolution, many of them members from the old political and business class of the Díaz government exiled north of the border, were also politically active.

The intensive participation of expatriates in Mexico's political developments made it only natural that Mexican political and military leaders visited the communities north of the border and used them as a political arena to advance their agendas.

José Vasconcelos, for example visited Mexican communities in California, New Mexico and Texas to launch his campaign against Ortiz Rubio, the official candidate of the already mentioned PNR. Vasconcelos' visits generated enthusiasm and support among many expatriates, particularly those opposed to the anticlerical governments installed after the Revolution. These people collected funds in his favor and elaborated a list of demands that included getting the right to vote from abroad if he won the elections which he did not[63].

The different Mexican presidents who governed during this early period of the twentieth century did not have a specific policy towards Mexicans abroad. They however, made some efforts to control emigration to the United States, which became a major national concern particularly because the size of the Mexican population diminished considerably due to the revolutionary wars (Corwin 1978). Even though there was not a coherent government policy, the political mobilization of Mexican expatriates stimulated by the Mexican Revolution had its impact in the United States. The liberal ideas that flowed from the revolutionary movement and that were integrated into the Mexican

[63] A full recount of these events appears in Santamaría Gómez (2001).

Constitution of 1917 influenced the attitudes of expatriates towards their host country. Mexican consuls of the time became active in organizing the community north of the border and encouraged immigrant workers to establish liberal clubs in the United States, unionize and demand better working conditions. These activities were obviously limited in scope (Corwin 1978).

During the Great Depression, a large number of Mexicans in the United States were deported back to Mexico. This situation along with a new highly nationalist and inward looking attitude on the part of Mexico's elite marked a decline in the interactions between Mexican political actors and the expatriate community. For more than forty years, the Mexican government did not interact with Mexicans in the United States, except when defending the rights of Mexican laborers, who were seen as highly vulnerable to the exploitation of Anglo employers[64]. Therefore, expatriates and Mexican-Americans alike turned their attention to the United States.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Mexican government avoided any intervention in the Chicano Movement. When the leadership of that movement visited Mexico to request support from the Mexican government they received no response, a reception that generated resentment and distrust towards the Mexican authorities. Despite that, Luis Echeverría (1970-1976) took the most active interest in expatriate colonies since the government of Lázaro Cárdenas and in the summer of 1972 toured Mexican-American communities (Corwin 1978).

[64] It is important to remark, however, that there was some relationship between the government of Lázaro Cárdenas and the Mexican community abroad (although there were no defined policies towards expatriates during his administration). Therefore, the oil expropriation in 1937-38 generated an important support from the Mexican community in the United States to this policy.

This trip created a strong impression on President Echeverría who "found himself besieged by *mojados* asking *el jefe* for a contract labor program, or some form of legalization" (Corwin 1978, p. 197). As a result, he supported the establishment of a new labor accord between Mexico and the United States but by 1974, when it became evident that the American government would not accept such an idea he abandoned that plan. Influenced by new advisers like sociologist Jorge Bustamente who insisted that Mexico should not subsidize American economic imperialism with a cheap labor program, he then followed the policy of protecting by any means possible undocumented workers and their families already in the United States.

Echeverría's government also made the first efforts to understand the reasons behind Mexican emigration to the United States. For this purpose, he created a commission[65] in 1972 to study the subject. Thanks to the data produced by this commission, remittances were regarded, for the first time, as a pillar of the Mexican economy. After that, Mexican authorities focused on guaranteeing that they continued to flow into Mexico, a goal that would drive, in later years, the policies implemented towards Mexicans abroad.

At the end of his administration, Echeverría met with the leadership of the Chicano movement in San Antonio, Texas. Afterwards, the government established a limited scholarship program for Mexican-Americans to study in Mexican universities and offered to promote cultural events in the United States oriented towards the Mexican community. In the end, however, these proposals were limited in scope and did little to

[65] The full name was *Comisión Intersecretarial para el Estudio del Problema de la Emigración Subrepticia de Trabajadores Mexicanos a los Estados Unidos de America.*

establish a working relationship between the Mexican state and the Mexican community in the United States.

Echeverría's successor, López Portillo (1976-1982), implemented few public policies towards Mexicans abroad. Perhaps the most important was an attempt to have a more systematic relationship with Chicano organizations by creating the *Comisión Mixta de Enlace* (Mixed Linking Commission), a body that promoted various meetings between those organizations and the Labor Ministry to discuss topics related to emigration to the United States. However, neither López Portillo nor Miguel de la Madrid, who succeeded him in 1982, attempted to establish a relationship with the first-generation Mexican community in the United States. Their timid rapprochement was only with Mexican-Americans. This can be explained by two facts: (1) first-generation Mexicans were not yet organized, and the Mexican government did not have any specific interest at the time in organizing them, and (2) they were not considered a settled community in the United States but only temporary migrants.

When the American president Carter proposed a double amnesty plan that would grant permanent immigrant status to all illegal aliens who had resided in the United States before January first, 1970 and a non-deportable alien status to those that had taken up residence between that date and December 31, 1976, the López Portillo administration responded skeptically. Even though his government had expressed a desire to solve the problem of illegal immigration, which was seen as a national crisis, the proposal offered by Carter was not attractive. As Corwin reports, Mexican authorities were concerned that this program could force or induce

> hundreds of thousands of perennial workers, as well as countless of family members already surreptitiously over the line since 1970 to settle permanently on the American side, thus eventually cutting down income flow to Mexico and accentuating a problem in Mexican identity (Corwin 1978, p. 212).

Permanent residency was seen as a potential threat to the continued flow of remittances to Mexico[66]. This view, however, was not officially expressed and the Mexican government avoided taking any position on the different amnesty proposals introduced in the American Congress between the 1970s and early 1980s[67]. When in 1986 the United States Congress finally approved an immigration amnesty that benefited 3.5 million persons, more than half of whom were from Mexico, the Mexican government had no choice but to deal with the new reality: a large share of Mexicans abroad would likely settle with their families in the United States and, as a result, would probably send less money to Mexico. This situation pointed towards the need of a new set of policies that would help guarantee loyalty to Mexico on the part of the expatriate community as well as the continuous flow of foreign currency. During the 1980s, however, the Mexican government was not ready to develop a concrete program in that direction.

The relationship with Mexican-Americans and first generation Mexicans in the United States was finally institutionalized during the administration of Carlos Salinas (1988-1994) when in 1990 his government created the Program for Mexican

[66] Mexican officials may have also been opposed to Carter's double amnesty plan, because that program was opposed by the major Mexican-American organizations which saw in this and other proposals introduced in Congress during the 1970s a limited solution to the problem of illegal immigration. As de la Garza (1997) points out, in 1978 Mexican-Americans suggested Mexican officials to work with them to opposed proposed immigration reforms introduced at the time. Although the Mexican government refused to work with them, due to fears of a negative reaction by the United States government, it is possible that it still attempted to be congruent with the Mexican-American position.

[67] Conversation with Arnaldo Torres, former leader of LULAC. May 21, 2004. Atlanta Georgia.

Communities Abroad (PMCA) within the Foreign Relations Ministry. Officially, the PMCA was established in response to a direct demand of Mexican-American organizations (Gonzáles Gutiérrez and Schumacher 1998; Gonzáles Gutiérrez 2003). Unofficially, it was also a response to the widespread support that Cárdenas' 1988 bid for the presidency received among Mexican communities in the United States (Smith 1998b, p. 222) because the government realized the capacity of expatriates to mobilize towards their homeland with unpredictable consequences for the PRI.

The PMCA had two implicit short-term goals. The first was to cultivate ties between the Mexican government and the Mexican-American community so that the latter could become an important ally in lobbying the American government at a time when Mexico's foreign and economic policy goals had become more attached than ever to political developments in the United States (De la Garza 1997). The second was to formalize the relationship between the Mexican government and Mexican expatriates to mediate and control when necessary their influence on Mexico's political developments.

The program was to be coordinated by the 42 Mexican consulates and 23 cultural institutes in the United States. Its main tasks were to change the image of Mexican communities abroad in Mexico; to educate Mexicans abroad about Mexico, to help them establish organizations to acquire better representation in their adopted communities; and to collaborate with other institutions in the United States at the local and national levels to design and develop public policies that would help elevate the living conditions of Mexicans and people of Mexican descent (Gonzáles Gutiérrez and Schumacher 1998, p. 190-191).

In this regard, the PMCA was presented as an instrument for cooperation between Mexico and the United States over long-term goals as well. The guiding idea was that by tightening the relationship with the Mexican community abroad, Mexico not only would strengthen the identity and sense of belonging of Mexicans on both sides of the border, but would also increase its economic and cultural ties with the United States. After all, both Mexico and the United States could benefit from the economic and social improvement of the Mexican communities in the United States (Gonzáles Gutiérrez and Schumacher 1998). The program would, thus, require an unprecedented negotiation with the American government at the local and national levels.

This program has had many consequences for both Mexico and the United States. For example, it has contributed to the unprecedented mobilization of Mexicans towards their homeland as Mexican authorities (including consular officials and state governors) have encouraged expatriates to organize around organizations based on the place and state of origin. As a result the number of HTAs grew from a handful prior to the 1990s to more than 1000 by the year 2000. Although, HTAs and SFs were non-political, over time it became evident that they could exercise important political influence in local and sub-national political processes on the identification of municipal and state budgetary priorities. Over the years, HTAs and SFs joined forces with expatriate political organizations that emerged independently to demand the right to vote from abroad (see Chapter 4).

The PMCA was also a catalyst towards the 1997 dual nationality reforms and the consolidation of state offices that attend to émigrés (Gonzáles Gutiérrez 2003). Although the program did not achieve its original goal of converting Mexican–Americans into a

lobby that could advocate in favor of Mexico's foreign policy goals, it certainly contributed to increasing the ties between the Mexican-American community and the Mexican government and has allowed their collaboration on common goals.

In the year 2000, when Fox became president of Mexico, he established a structure parallel to the PMCA that created a lot of confusion in the relationship between Mexico and the Mexican communities abroad. This was the Presidential Office for Mexicans Abroad (POMA), which was established with the goal of giving émigrés and Mexican-Americans a privileged access to the president. It was headed by a Mexican-American, Juan Hernández, who acted as an ambassador of the president to those communities. During his trips to the United States, Hernández constantly raised the expectations of the Mexican community by promising that they would be able to vote in Mexican elections soon, a promise originally made by president Fox, and by encouraging them to invest in Mexico under very privileged conditions. As Gónzalez Gutierrez explained, in contrast to the PMCA, whose actions were implemented through consular offices in a deliberately discreet form that avoided any direct interference in American domestic affairs, the activities of the new office were constantly publicized by Hernández and highlighted in the Mexican and American press (Gonzáles Gutiérrez 2003).

In the end, the office achieved little, except for unrealistically increasing the political expectations of émigrés towards their homeland. On August 6th, 2002 President Fox eliminated the office and replaced it with the National Council for Mexican Communities Abroad in the Foreign Affairs Ministry. Mexican expatriate organizations protested the decision and demanded an explanation. Why should they give up privileged access to the Mexican president and accept being assigned again to the foreign affairs

ministry? This strained relations between the Fox administration and émigrés, which for two years had generally supported its governmental actions.

The government explained that the new Council, which attempted to integrate the functions of the PMCA and the POMA would include as a central structure the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IMA)[68]. The institute would be governed by a 120-person Council, one hundred of whom would be elected from within the United States. This proposal generated again a lot of opposition among émigrés. Three groups were easily identifiable. First there were those that had been very active since the early 1990s in lobbying for the right to vote from abroad and that belonged to the CDPME. This organization had the greatest access to the Mexican government and had significant influence over the design of the IMA. Despite this, it took a cautious attitude towards the establishment of the IMA and some of its members complained that it had an authoritarian decision making structure in which émigrés would not have an independent voice. Political activists linked with the most left-wing sectors within the PRD composed the second group. Having promoted unsuccessful economic boycotts against the Mexican government as a means of getting political rights in Mexico, they resisted the creation of the IMA from the beginning, joining forces with a third group consisting of the presidents and former presidents of state federations and with Mexican businessmen from California and Texas, (some of whom were linked to the PRI). Together they signed the California Act[69], which rejected the IMA and instead proposed the creation of an autonomous body

[68] Interviews of the author with members of the Coalition For the Political Rights of Mexicans Abroad during September and October 2002.

[69] Personal conversations with the leadership of organizations from Zacatecas on May 2004 point out that the California Act was supported by the governor of Zacatecas, Ricardo Monreal, who along with the governor of Oaxaca José Murat, attempted to undermine Fox's policies towards the expatriate community. These affirmations could be true considering that one of the main promoters of the Act was Manuel de la Cruz, the official representative in the United States of Zacatecas' government.

made up of delegates from Mexican communities abroad according to state of origin, and having direct access to Mexican ministers and members of Congress.

Although the Council was eventually set up, the widespread opposition and the contentious process of selection of candidates in different American cities put the government on the defensive and diminished the legitimacy of the new body. Overall, this episode demonstrated the extent to which Mexican communities had become politicized in the last decade, thanks in large measure to the receptiveness that Mexican authorities had shown to them.

3.2.2.4 The Role of Sub-national Governments

In the last two decades state governors and local authorities from areas that produce high emigration levels have interacted with expatriates as much as the federal authorities. For instance, prior to the creation of the PMCA, some governors such as Genaro Borrego from Zacatecas (1986-1992), were already visiting their expatriates with the goals of tightening ties with them and guaranteeing that remittances would keep flowing into their economies. These visits helped expatriates organize around their places of origin and motivated them to participate more actively in the economic and social development of their hometowns. Although originally these policies of rapprochement may have had the goal of controlling the political and economic participation of expatriates, eventually they also allowed emigrants to acquire greater autonomy vis-à-vis the governments of their states of origin and even the federal government.

The active role played by sub-national entities in the incorporation of expatriates is directly related to the processes of deregulation and decentralization that the Mexican state implemented during the 1980s and 1990s as a result of the deep economic crisis the

country confronted after 1982. The dismantling of the developmental and interventionist state forced sub-national and local authorities to find new ways to finance the economic and social development of their regions. One path available for states that produced high levels of emigration was by tapping their population residing abroad.

For this purpose, the government of Zacatecas first established a program negotiated with the state federation of Los Angeles in 1992 called 2x1 in which every dollar invested by the organization would be matched by the state government and by the Federal government[70].

Between 1993 and 1995 the federal government under the administrations of Salinas de Gortari and Ernesto Zedillo, implemented the program *Solidaridad Internacional* or International Solidarity, which was the version oriented towards émigrés of the original Programa Nacional de Solidaridad (National Solidarity Program) or PRONASOL. This program worked along with the PCMA and institutionalized the 2x1 model negotiated with Zacatecas (Goldring 2002). A few other governments took advantage of this program including that of Guerrero[71].

When the International Solidarity program ended due in great part to a new economic crisis that started in December 1994, the state of Zacatecas kept implementing the program 2x1 through special agreements between successive governors, the federal government, and the Zacatecan Federations in the United States. The implementation of the 2x1 program brought important investment to the state, but also created tensions between the local political class and the emigrant community. A particular bone of contention was that municipal governments were forced to allocate parts of their budgets

[70] Interview with the President of the Zacatecan Federation in Los Angeles, October 10th, 2001.
[71] Interview with a president of an organization from Guerrero in Chicago, October 5, 2001.

already designated to other priorities to the projects suggested by HTAs. The 2x1 program was giving emigrants political strength at the local and state level that represented a challenge to the clientelistic arrangements that had allowed the state to be dominated by the PRI for years without opposition. Émigrés established a system to guarantee the transparent dispensation of the funds and, in cases where they suspected corruption, immediately protested. This was not well received by local politicians. In many municipalities émigrés started to influence the selection of candidates within the PRI itself and the emerging opposition parties and even became candidates themselves.

When Vicente Fox arrived in power, the *Federación Zacatecana del Sur de California*, as the Zacatecan Federation had been called since 1997, had become so strong that the president of the organization at the time, Guadalupe Gómez de Lara[72], was able to get direct access to Fox. In February 2000, Gómez was invited to a meeting in Mexico about remittances and, in a public presentation, he told the president that the federation would raise 5 million dollars to invest in Mexico if the federal government matched this money through a 3x1 program. The president took the challenge seriously and a month later he traveled to California where he officially launched the 3x1 program, which became a signature policy of his administration. The attention given to Fox's visit to California in the Mexican and American press transformed Gómez de Lara and his organization into an essential participant in any discussion that dealt with the Mexican diaspora or the role that émigrés should play in the economic development of their country of origin. In the following two years he was invited to the White House and to meet with the minority leader of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi. The

[72] This information is based on an interview with Guadalupe Gómez on May 21, 2004, in Atlanta, Georgia, and a follow up of Mexican an American press in the last four years.

political influence Zacatecan émigrés acquired during years of constant dealing with the authorities of their state of origin was already being felt, for instance, in Zacatecas and Los Angeles. In 1998 the Federation of Los Angeles helped elect Ricardo Monreal as the first PRD governor of the state. For that purpose they created the *Frente Civico Zacatecano* (Civic Front) an organization with a specific political orientation, which originally emerged as a result of divisions within the federation between those supporting the PRI candidate and those supporting the PRD candidate. Since then the *Frente Cívico*, has also supported politicians in the United States.

Besides Zacatecas, other states have opened up opportunities for the participation of expatriates. Although the government of Guanajuato did not originally implement an ambitious program to encourage expatriate investment, after 1994 it turned to a more aggressive policy. In September 1994, the first PAN governor from the state, Carlos Medina Plascencia, visited the large community of Guanajuatenses in Dallas and provided them with ten thousand dollars to help the city's HTAs to integrate into a wider organization representing the whole state of Guanajuato, which was eventually called Casa Guanajuato. This money was used by the newly created organization as a down payment to buy a building for their headquarters. The governor who followed Medina Plascencia in Guanajuato, Vicente Fox, also provided on-going support for the organization. The strong relationship established between the leadership of Casa Guanajuato in Dallas and Vicente Fox, eventually translated into support from the Guanajuato community in Dallas for his campaign for the presidency in 2000. Although Guanajuatenses in Dallas have not acquired the level of political autonomy that has the organization of Zacatecans in Los Angeles, they have been able to exercise important

political influence in their communities and state of origin. In December 2001, for example, they protested the removal of a state official who previously had worked very closely with Casa Guanajuato in Dallas. As part of that protest they threatened to stop sending money back home through the 3x1 program in which they were participating. Eventually they accepted the governor's decision, but not without an explanation and after causing adverse publicity in the press of Guanajuato and Dallas (Corchado and Sandoval 2001).

The examples of Zacatecas and Guanajuato show how the structures of opportunity for the participation of émigrés in their homeland's political life have been created simultaneously at the national and the sub-national levels. State level policies towards expatriates may have had the original purpose of controlling the political attitudes of expatriates (Zacatecas) or establishing a stronghold for an opposition party within the Mexican community in the United States (Guanajuato), while at the same time motivating emigrants to invest in their states of origin. However, by helping emigrants to organize and by giving them a specific purpose they have also showed them that they have considerable political and economic strength.

3.2.2.4.1 The National Governor's Conference

Since 2000, when Mexico elected a non-PRI president for the first time in 70 years,, the country has been confronting an uncertain process of institutional redefinition. One of the major subjects of debate has been the extensive centralism that still exists in Mexico even though the constitution describes Mexico as federal system. In this context, sub-national authorities have demanded greater autonomy from the Federal government, and greater participation in the distribution of the national income. For that purpose, on

July 13, 2002, fifteen governors from different political parties formed the *Conferencia Nacional de Gobernadores* (National Governor's Conference) or CONAGO.

During its meeting in Monterrey, Nuevo León on September 29, 2003, the organization passed a resolution asserting an independent role in the definition of Mexico's policies towards Mexicans abroad. This resolution emerged from previous attempts by different governors to establish a relationship with expatriate organizations, not only with those from their state. The governor of Oaxaca, for example, organized an event in December 2002 in which governors, emigrant leaders and legislators declared that they would try to build the necessary consensus in Congress to grant expatriates the right to vote. Although further steps in this respect were probably never taken, governors that belonged to the CONAGO became very active in developing a relationship with a variety of Mexican organizations in different American cities. In this regard, the CONAGO become a space from which emigrants were able to exercise their influence to advance their political agenda in Mexico.

3.2.3. Prevailing Elite Strategies/ Political Culture and Idioms.

Mexico's political system for many years presented a dilemma for scholars. In contrast to other Latin–American countries it was fairly stable since the 1930s and, although it had many authoritarian features, during the 1950s and 1960s some American academics believed that the country had a pluralist system, even if in a diminished form as compared with the US (Tucker 1957; Vernon 1963; Scott 1964). By the 1970s a consensus emerged that the country had an authoritarian regime (Kaufman 1977; Reyna 1977; Smith 1979), but even this regime was difficult to define, because authoritarianism in Mexico did not look like the authoritarianism established elsewhere at the time and

because many sectors of society had at least some form of representation within the system through the PRI's corporatist structure. Whatever the political situation that led to Mexico's unique political system, a few things were clear. Conflicts among the elite were resolved within the system itself at least until the 1980s, and emerging political challengers were consistently co-opted through the corporatist structure of the state even as late as the early 1990s when signs that the country was moving towards a new regime were already evident. In addition, during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s new electoral laws were developed to gradually allow the inclusion of an emerging opposition that could not be co-opted through the traditional means.

Some sectors, however, were consistently excluded from the political system. These included people from the countryside, many of whom became emigrants. Some areas such as Mexico's Central Plateau (which includes states such as Michoacán, Jalisco, Guanajuato, and Zacatecas) were densely populated and this surplus population could not be absorbed into Mexico's industrial development or into the agricultural labor force. As Corwin (Corwin 1978, p. 184) has pointed out, government officials and planners, but not the public, were aware of this situation, and for this reason they sought to select *braceros* from that region of the country with some success during World War II. The perpetuation of the migratory networks probably helped contain political conflict. In this regard, emigration became a safety valve for Mexico's political stability.

When Mexico liberalized its economy in the 1980s and 1990s, people from the countryside were still excluded from enjoying the fruits of economic development. Those that emigrated north, however, were thought by bureaucratic elites as crucial actors in the development of at least certain regions of the country and, as a result, the country's

political and administrative elite sought to intensify its relationship with them. At the beginning, the Mexican government did what it knew best: it attempted to co-opt emigrants as a new corporative sector within the state. This strategy, however, did not work in great part because many émigrés had already been exposed to other forms of political participation more pluralistic in nature.

The new degree of political autonomy that emigrants developed after the 1990s demonstrated to Mexican authorities that it was necessary to develop new strategies to channel their participation in Mexico's politics and economics.

3.2.4. Contingencies of Time and Place

A large part of the incorporation or reincorporation of émigrés into their homeland polity is determined by specific balances of power and the alliance structure at a given time. The composition of the party system, the relative strengths of certain political parties over others, and divisions within the elite at a given moment open up opportunities for the incorporation of emigrants that may not be available in other contexts.

For many years Mexico had a hegemonic party system in which electoral competition was almost none existent or very limited. By the 1990s, as a result of democratization, Mexico became a multiparty system with three main parties that together took 90% of the vote, though none managed alone to cross the 50% threshold. Elections held at the local and national level since 1997 have shown that the three main parties are highly competitive and have the chance to win elections. These processes, however, also have shown that swing voters, who represent around ten percent of the electorate, are the ones who decide most elections. In this regard, Mexico has now a

scenario of unstable political alignments, which is particularly promising for the incorporation of new political actors such as émigrés into the system. As Costain has pointed out, “unstable alignments indicate governmental weakness, which in turn lessens the costs for new movements to form” (Costain 1994, p. 24) and to participate. Since none of Mexico’s three main political parties can count on long-term majorities to win elections, Mexicans abroad may represent an attractive electorate even if only a small part of the potential electorate participates in the election.

3.3. Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Mexican expatriates have been able to achieve high degrees of incorporation into their homeland polity. This has been possible after changes in Mexico’s citizenship and nationality laws, the implementation of a policy of rapprochement with those residing abroad, and the opening up of new spaces for the participation of emigrants as a result of democratization.

As new opportunities for their participation were gradually opening up, Mexican expatriates chose to follow an interest group strategy to push for even greater levels of incorporation—namely, the right to vote from abroad and the right to be elected. Although full incorporation has not yet occurred (as defined in Chapter 1)—Mexicans abroad cannot yet be directly elected for political office (although they can be elected indirectly through parties’ lists)—it is clear that they are more incorporated in their homeland polity than ever before.

The question remains what this incorporation will imply for Mexico; and whether this incorporation will increase the interest in participation of Mexican emigrants in their homeland. So far, only some sectors within the Mexican community have been politically

active towards their homeland. After the right to vote from abroad was approved, only 56,749 persons registered to participate in the election, “about one half of one percent of all the adult Mexicans in the U.S. and fewer that two percent of the eligible voters registered for absentee ballots” (Center 2006). The was probably the result of the many limitations that the law imposed to participate in the election, but also it reflected the lack of knowledge émigrés possess about politics in their home country (Center 2006).

Yet, it is too soon to conclude anything definitive about the ways in which Mexicans will participate in the political life of their home country. The spaces for their involvement in their home polity have just been opened. It may well be that in later years a larger number of Mexicans will participate in their countries’ electoral processes, as for example is the case of Dominicans (Center 2006), or that only a few of them will keep being interested in doing so.

CHAPTER 4

Mexican organizations in the United States

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present an overview of the organizations that Mexicans in the United States have established in the last two decades. The evidence is based on a study of 34 organizations in four American cities: Dallas, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. These cities have large Mexican immigrant communities and represent different patterns and timing of migration flows and diverse political and socioeconomic settings (see discussion in Chapter 1).

Mexican organizations have been extensively studied in the last decade, particularly by scholars interested in transnational activities(Gonzáles Gutiérrez 1995; Goldring 1998a; Smith and Guarnizo 1998a; Smith and Guarnizo 1998b; Smith and Guranizo 1998; Zabin and Escala Rabada 1998; Moctezuma Longoria 1999; Smith 1999b; Smith 1999a; Fitzgerald 2000; Goméz Arnau and Trigueros 2000; Leiken 2000; Moctezuma Longoria and Rodriguez Ramírez 2000; Cano 2001; Goldring 2002; Rivera Salgado and Escala Rabada 2002; Moctezuma Longoria 2003; Smith 2003; Moctezuma Longoria In press). Most scholars concentrate on those based on the immigrants' place of origin. I build on this research, but also try to address some of its limitations. First, most of this literature deals with activities directed towards the home state[73]. Furthermore, this

[73] Exceptions are Zabin and Escala Rabada (1998) and Cano (2001)

literature has barely touched on the role these organizations are playing in the political aspects of incorporation of Mexicans abroad into home and host polities, since most of it is the work of sociologists and anthropologists with little interest in politics[74]. Second, except for a few specific cases (Martinez Saldaña 2002; Smith 2003), most of this research has not identified other forms of organizational life that Mexicans have recently built in the United States. This is problematic because post-IRCA Mexican immigrants have been organizing in more than one way. If we conclude that organizations based on place of origin are the only ones that matter, we may miss much of their organizational life in the East Coast of the United States, where their strongest organizations are of another type.

I selected three types of organizations that have been created and sustained by the Mexican government, as well as autonomously generated in the last two decades, and that have the potential of impacting migrant incorporation: (1) Organizations focused on the communities and states of origin including home town associations (HTA) and state federations (SF); (2) political organizations; and (3) civic or service provider organizations.

4.2 Research Methodology and Results

While conducting this research it became evident that the membership and activities of these organizations tend to overlap. For example, members of SFs can also be members of civic or political organizations or vice versa. In addition, some organizations considered here might be part of wider, less structured organizations that have other purposes. For example, various SFs may amalgamate into a council with

[74] A few transnational studies have started to focus on the incorporation process in the host country, but none of them covers the Mexican case (Guarnizo 2001; Morawska 2001; Ueda 2001).

political purposes as happened in Los Angeles and Chicago, or into another organization with service provider purposes such as happened in Dallas. In this regard the classification presented here represents a useful but not definitive tool to study the organizational life of the Mexican immigrant community in the United States.

I organize my data on first-generation organizations according to their 1) history 2) mission and profile, 3) institutional strength 4) political leverage both towards their home and host countries and, 5) the role they are currently playing in facilitating or hindering the incorporation of Mexican migrants into the polities of both Mexico and the United States. Finally, I give a short review of the Consultative Council of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad, an important institutional innovation of 2002. The data that I will present about the council is based on a collection of internal documents, talks with its members and with Mexican officials that work for the institute, as well as my personal observations during its third ordinary meeting in Atlanta, Georgia in May 2004.

4.2.1 Origins and History

Data on the origins of immigrant organizations are relevant because they illuminate the extent to which immigrant groups have developed autonomously or have been shaped by state or non-state actors. Even when they were created autonomously, the activities and agendas of immigrant organizations may be affected or transformed as a result of their interaction with state actors both in their sending and receiving societies, as well as their enhanced access to political influence that was not previously available to them. As can be seen in Figure 4.1, while there has been a steady increase in the number of organizations since the 1970s, most of the organizations originated in the 1990s or later,

well after the implementation of IRCA and the adoption by the Mexican government of active policies towards Mexican expatriates.

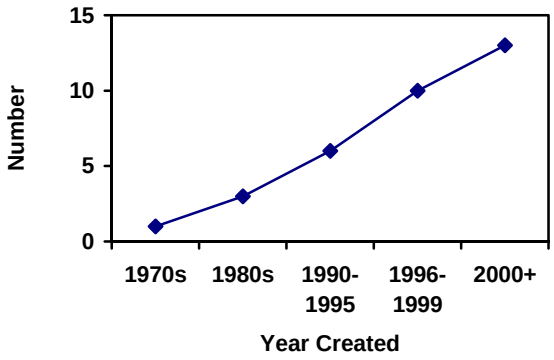


Figure 4.1: Origin of organizations

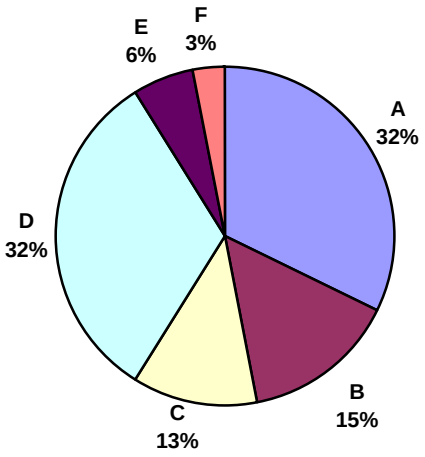
The only organization in my sample created in the 1970s was an HTA. I focused on SFs, but since most state federations are composed of HTAs, the heads of many of the SFs I interviewed also led HTAs and as a result I was able to gather the history behind some of these organizations as well. Their accounts were varied but the points in common were that some HTAs emerged autonomously (e.g. a trip to the hometown after many years led to the realization that there were a lot of things to improve) or were motivated by hometown political or religious authorities around the 1980s or early 1990s. Many of the original leaders of these organizations were Mexican immigrants who obtained legal status with IRCA or a few years prior to 1986. Once established, the HTAs integrated into federations after the governor of their state of origin and/or consular officials in the cities where they resided suggested that they do so. Many HTAs, however, were organized after the Federations were established. The *Federación Zacatecana del Sur de California* (Zacatecan Federation of Southern California) the

oldest SF existent in the United States, for example, started with five HTAs in 1986 and by 2004 it represented 60. In this regard, once in place, SFs have motivated other people to organize around HTAs and join their ranks. In many cases they provide incentives to do so, because they give new leaders of HTAs knowledge about effective ways to invest in their communities of origin and may even be, for instance, the main intermediaries between the associations and local and sub-national authorities in Mexico. Furthermore, as was the case of the Zacatecan Federations until 2003, they have monopolized the control of programs such as the "3x1" discussed in chapter 3[75]. Finally, SFs also give presidents of HTAs the chance to participate in wider and more influential organizations that can have greater political impact in their state of origin, and in some cases in the cities were they reside.

Figure 4.2 presents the main circumstances that led to the emergence of the first-generation Mexican organizations considered in this sample, while Figures 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 portray these circumstances by type of organization.

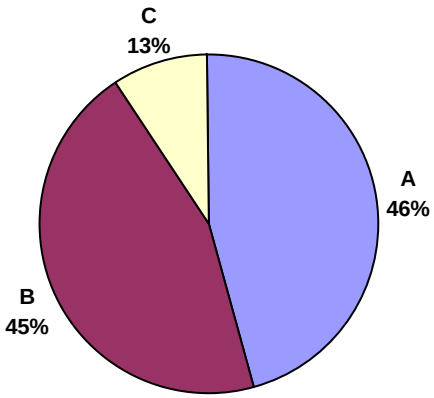
[75] In 2003, when President Vicente Fox decided to institutionalize at the national level the 3x1 program followed until then by some states such as Zacatecas, it became possible for a HTAs or an individual immigrant to participate without having to belong to a SF. For some people interviewed for this research this situation may have had the effect of diminishing the strength of some federations such as those from Zacatecas.

Figure 4.2: Main factors leading to founding of first-generation Mexican Organizations



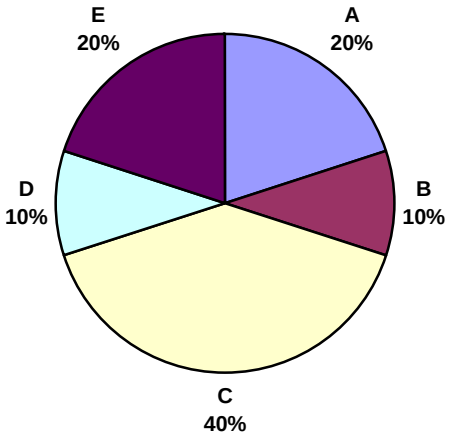
A: Autonomously generated; B: Reaction to homeland-generated conflict; C: Reaction to host- state generated conflict; D: In conjunction/collaboration with sending state institutional organizations; E: In conjunction/collaboration with non-state actors; F: As a result of activities in host state

Figure 4.3: Main factors leading to founding of first-generation Mexican Political Organizations



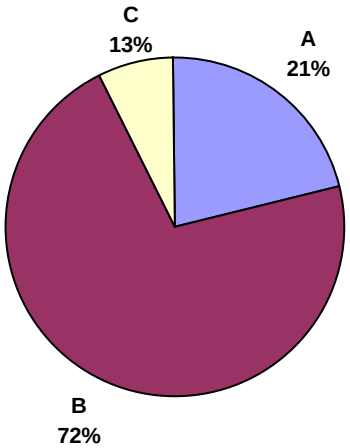
A: Autonomously generated; B: As a reaction to homeland generated conflict; C: In conjunction/collaboration with non state actors

Figure 4.4: Main factors leading to founding of first-generation Mexican Civic Organizations



A: Autonomously generated; B: As a reaction to homeland generated conflict; C: As a reaction to host state generated conflict; D: In conjunction/collaboration with sending state institutional organizations; E: In conjunction/collaboration with non state actors

Figure 4.5: Main factors leading to founding of first-generation Mexican State Federations / HTAs



A: Autonomously generated; B: In conjunction/collaboration with sending state institutional organizations; C: a result of activities in host state

As can be seen in Figure 4.2, the homeland state's actions are directly correlated with the emergence of most of the organizations identified (47%), either by helping immigrants organize or by giving them reasons to do so (for example by involuntarily provoking a reaction from emigrants to a state policy). These data lead me to conclude that while host state actions (specifically the implementation of IRCA) have created the conditions for emigrants to organize, home state actions have played a more direct and consequential role.

This last assessment, however, is clearest for organizations based on place of origin and politics. Figure 4.5 demonstrates that most SFs and HTAs were created in conjunction with the Mexican authorities. For example, the *Federación Zacatecana del Sur de California* was created in 1986 with the support of Genaro Borrego, then the Governor of Zacatecas, while the *Federación de Clubes Unidos de Zacatecanos en Illinois* (Federation of United Zacatecan Clubs in Illinois) was created after a visit to Chicago in 1995 of Borrego's successor, Arturo Romo Gutiérrez. Another example is *Fraternidad Sinaloense* (Sinaloense Fraternity) in Los Angeles, which was established in 1991 after the local Consul, José Angel Pescador Osuna, encouraged people form Sinaloa to establish HTAs and then to amalgamate into a Federation. The same scenario applies to all the other cases of groups based on place of origin.

Figure 4.3 demonstrates that political organizations originated in reaction to homeland-generated conflicts including unpopular policies and the reluctance of Mexican authorities to grant voting rights from abroad. An example of an organization that has its origins in unpopular policies is the International Coalition of Mexicans Abroad (CIME), which was created in November 1999 after the Mexican government raised the deposit

for taking foreign vehicles across the border from $11 to between $400 and $800. This measure generated outrage among Mexican immigrants, including members of HTAs and SFs, since they often cross the border from the United States to Mexico with their American vehicles when visiting home. As a result of protests, the government withdrew the measure. Emboldened, some first-generation leaders, particularly in Dallas and Chicago, decided to create CIME as a first-generation organization separate from Mexican-American groups. CIME had a very strong take off because it was able to profit from the movement against the auto deposit. Nonetheless, divisions among its founders based on Mexican party lines have diminished its strength so that today it is a minor organization. Nevertheless, it was the first time first-generation Mexican immigrants organized themselves around a clear bi-national agenda.

The Coalition for the Political Rights of Mexicans Abroad (*Coalición por los Derechos Políticos de los Mexicanos en el Exterior)* (CDPME) represents another example of a group created around homeland-generated conflict. Officially established in December 2001 with the purpose of agitating for the right to vote from abroad, it is composed in part by people who have been politically active towards Mexico since the late 1980s when Cuahutémoc Cárdenas campaigned for the presidency. Its membership also includes persons residing in Mexico with important political connections or academic posts, making it one of the most effective organizations lobbying the Mexican government.

The circumstances leading to the formation of an organization explain in great part its autonomy vis-à-vis the Mexican state. While HTAs and SFs have been closely linked to Mexican authorities from the beginning, political organizations tend to be more

independent (although some of their members may be close to specific political parties in Mexico). For instance, the origins of groups based on place of origin and politics reflect two different aspects of emigrants' interactions with their homeland. While HTAs and SFs are an organizational model encouraged by the Mexican state, political organizations reflect the unintended effects of Mexico's democratization process on the Mexican diaspora. Although political organizations have greater capacity to lobby in Mexico, some SFs have become very powerful as they have acquired greater autonomy from the Mexican state. SFs and HTAs may end up with greater influence than political organizations because of their larger bases and their considerable economic influence. Another possible scenario that has taken place already is the establishment of strategic alliances between different types of organizations.

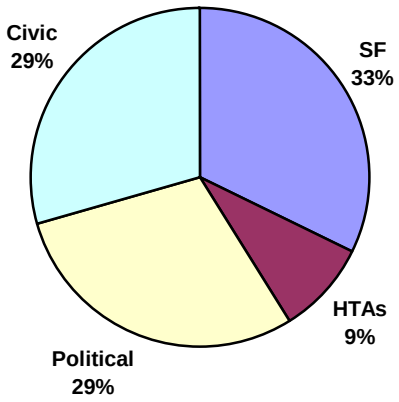
In contrast to organizations based on place of origin and politics, civic organizations (see Figure 4.4) tend to arise in reaction to an injustice in the host state usually committed by local authorities. Occasionally they emerged in collaboration with host state non-governmental institutions such as the Catholic Church or pro-immigrant coalitions based in specific cities. The *Concilio Hispano* (Hispanic council) in Chicago and Cecomex in New York, for example, were created as a response to perceived injustices against their founders or against others related to them. Meanwhile, *Asociación Tepeyac*, also in New York, was established in 1977 in collaboration with the Catholic Church in protest against the physical abuse of a Mexican restaurant worker by his employer. Because they were created as a result of host state-generated conflict, civic organizations tend to give most of their attention to the receiving country.

4.2.2 Mission and Profile

4.2.2.1 Original Profile

As can be seen in Figure 4.6, 42% of the organizations are based on place of origin of which three are HTAs, and the rest are SFs. Twenty-nine percent are political organizations[76] and 29% are civic organizations. This sample does not represent the real composition of first-generation Mexican organizations in the United States. A truly representative sample would show that organizations based on place of origin are more common. Nonetheless, the sample presented here includes enough variation of organizational types to allow some comparison.

Figure 4.6: Type of organizations identified in the study



[76] Two out of the 10 political organizations derive from state federations: basically they represent the integration of various federations in Chicago and Los Angeles. These are the *Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas* (Council of Mexican Federations) or Confemex and the *Consejo de Presidentes de Federaciones Mexicans en Los Angeles, California* (Council of Presidents of Mexican Federations of Los Angeles, California). Since their goals are predominantly and explicitly political, I classify these as political.

4.2.2.2 Evolution of Profile

Even though many of the organizations had a specific and limited profile when they first emerged, over time many have evolved and acquired additional purposes. This is particularly evident for SFs and civic organizations. Of the ten SFs, eight were created to participate in the economic development of their state of origin (the remaining two, *Casa Puebla* in New York and *Familia Nuevo León* in Dallas, had from the outset more multidimensional profiles). However, the original mission has typically evolved with greater experience and more resources. Most of them now engage in various activities focused on the host state that are common to those performed by civic organizations. Besides the beauty pageants and similar events, which they carried out to raise money, they are now more directly preoccupied with facilitating the assimilation and incorporation of their members. *Casa Guanajuato* in Dallas is a good example. After acquiring a building thanks to the help of the government of Guanajuato, this group has been offering immigration advice, English as a Second Language classes and pre-Hispanic dance and Karate lessons for children to keep them off the streets in an area where they are at high risk of becoming gang members. These activities are not only oriented towards members but the general Mexican community in Dallas, which has allowed this organization to profit from the professional and technical experiences of people not only from Guanajuato but from other places of origin as well. To motivate the cohesion of the community, this organization presents exhibitions of artistic works of the Guanajuatense and Mexican population in Dallas, and celebrates cultural and social events over the year. The different Zacatecan federations are another example. The *Federación de Zacatecanos del Norte de Texas* (the Zacatecanos' Federation of North

Texas) provides assistance to undocumented immigrants from the state and identification documents in addition to the *Matrícula Consular* distributed by the Mexican consulates to facilitate opening bank accounts. In addition, it has conducted workshops with local banks to secure acceptance of these documents. The Zacatecan federations of both Chicago and Los Angeles are also active. Both offer university scholarships to children of Zacatecan immigrants and have created youth organizations.

Due to their non-profit status, many of these organizations avoid performing open political activities (this will be discussed in the next section). However, in interviews their leaders argued that they usually encourage members with United States citizenship to register and vote. Even if they have not adopted open political stances on American political issues, beyond the demand for legalization of the undocumented, SFs have provided the major grass-roots base for the movement in favor of the right to vote from abroad. Only two of the presidents of these organizations I interviewed opposed that measure. Since my fieldwork, these two have been replaced by new leaders supporting that cause. The debate about the right to vote from abroad certainly helped politicize organizations based on place of origin. Even if their members and leaders originally avoided politics--in some cases because of negative experiences in PRI-dominated Mexico--the possibility of voting from abroad gave rise to expanding expectations. It is not rare to see, for example, former presidents of these organizations, or even their current leaders, proposing themselves as candidates for the Mexican Congress through their inclusion in the candidate lists of the Mexican political parties[77] even when they

[77] For the 2003 mid-term elections in Mexico, Manuel de la Cruz, a former president of the Zacatecan Federation of Los Angeles became a candidate for Congress for the PRD through his inclusion in the party list. The number of candidates on the list that are elected for office is a function of the share of the total vote won by the party. Another example is Gustavo Santiago, current president of the *Federación*

cannot be directly elected for political office at the national level. This door to participation in Mexico's political life was opened during the 2000 elections when for the first time an expatriate from Los Angeles was elected to the Chamber of Deputies for the PRI. In this regard, SFs have become political organizations even if they do not explicitly recognize it. The issue of the right to vote from abroad, however, is not the only factor that politicized them. Democratization in Mexico has meant that Mexico's political parties have turned their attention to new constituencies. This is particularly clear for local and sub-national political candidates from the regions where large emigrant groups originate. As a president of a SF from Guerrero pointed out:

> the economic resources we are investing in our states of origin are too large not to be noticed by the political classes there. We have a great impact in what happens there and it is thus obvious that many politicians come to visit us in the United States with the goal of gaining our endorsement.

For instance this endorsement has become essential for some political candidates. As another president from a Federation explained: "we clearly influence the political behavior of the people we have left behind in our towns of origin."

The constant visits from politicians to the SFs representing their states have certainly had an impact on those organizations. On the one hand, it has given them a concrete consciousness of their political power not only towards Mexico, but also towards the United States. On the other hand, it has divided them along party lines, threatening in some occasions their very existence.

Oaxaqueña de Comunidades y Organizaciones Indigenas en California, who also proposed himself in 2003 (although he was not finally selected) as a candidate for Congress on the PRI's list.

In the same way that SFs have been adopting new political and social goals, civic organizations have also been acquiring a political profile. In their case that may be a natural step, since the many immigration problems they deal with every day have made them conclude that the solutions are ultimately political. These organizations have become active supporters of initiatives to regularize the immigration situation of those illegally in the United States. Some organizations have also been establishing links with first-generation political organizations and thus also became open advocates of the right to vote from abroad.

4.2.2.3 Mexican Organizations: Exiles or Integrationists?

In his work on Turkish organizations in Germany Ogelman (2003) argued that most Turkish groups focus exclusively on their homeland, which he called an exile strategy. This was contrasted with an integrationist strategy focused on the host country. The explanation of the choice of an exile strategy is tied to the structures of opportunity available to Turks. While Turkey has been active in cultivating ties with its diaspora, Germany has made scant effort to facilitate their political incorporation; until recently (1998) even their offspring born in Germany could obtain citizenship only with great difficulty.

At first glance my research suggests that most Mexican organizations are strongly focused on their homeland: promoting the economic development of their places of origin or obtaining political rights in Mexico. Even civic organizations do not seem to be articulating a concrete political agenda in the United States even when much of their work is focused on helping immigrants improved their living conditions. However, having observed these organizations for more than four years, I doubt the veracity of such

a conclusion. Their profiles have been evolving and it is clear that as they become more institutionalized, more autonomous from Mexican authorities, and more conscious about their political power they are increasingly turning their attention to the host country. At the time I conducted my field work at least five of the eight traditional SFs had been courted by local politicians. Follow-up interviews show that interactions between local politicians and SF's leaders are on the rise. Furthermore, at least three of the ten political organizations demonstrate that Mexican immigrants are interested in incorporating in their host country. These include the *Frente Cívico Zacatecano* (Zacatecan Civic Front) based in Los Angeles and founded in 1998, the *Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas* (Council of Mexican Federations) or Confemex based in Chicago and established in 2003 and the *Consejo de Presidentes Federaciones Mexicanas en Los Angeles, California* (Council of Presidents of Mexican Federations in Los Angeles, California) or CPFLA based in Los Angeles[78] created in 2002. The first organization has pursued bi-national goals aimed at influencing political events both in Zacatecas and California. The other two organizations are part of the SFs Mexicans have established in Chicago and Los Angeles, respectively. In both cases, they seek to advance the political interests of migrants in both Mexico and the United States. As the first president of Confemex explained,

> We in the federations were very focused on our communities of origin, and were forgetting about our lives in the United States. Now we want to focus on advancing our political interests in this country. We know that we do not have a

[78] It is important to point out that all the state federations from Chicago and Los Angeles studied in this research belong to these new organizations.

lot of skills and resources to do so, but we will start local by supporting politicians in their campaigns for Congress, and by asking them to speak for our interests.

Then he added: "The first thing we need is an immigration amnesty, because without that we will not be able to solve all the other problems we confront in the United States." By 2006, CONFEMEX was an active participant in the rallies in Chicago against the Sensenbrenner bill. Members of the council in Los Angeles also expressed their intention to participate in both countries. They wish to create a strong political front that can advance the interests of Mexicans first in California and then, when they acquire more political skills, nationally, through the creation of alliances with organizations based in other states. Furthermore, several political organizations that have been largely focused on Mexico (CIME, based mostly in Chicago and Dallas, *Mexicanos Unidos*, based in Dallas, and more recently CDPME) have also participated in lobbying campaigns for an immigrant regularization or amnesty program.

Even though some organizations may be pure exile groups, some are also acquiring integrationist goals. Instead of being either one or the other, they are becoming truly bi-national. The main questions now are: What are their organizational resources? How effective are they in advancing their bi-national agenda?

4.2.3 Resource Mobilization Capacities

This section analyses membership and leadership structures and whether organizations have acquired a non-profit status and what implications this has. It also explores fund raising capacities, which determine to a great extent long-term viability.

4.2.3.1 Membership Structure

A survey conducted by Desipio et al. (2003) demonstrates that first-generation organizations have been unable to reach a large portion of the Mexican immigrant community. My research shows that membership varies according to the type of organization and fluctuates depending on specific events and circumstances. I also discovered, however, that the number of members does not necessarily correlate with their capacity to mobilize immigrants or to influence specific political events. Smaller but more cohesive organizations may have, sometimes, greater impact than larger ones.

The organizations with the most members are the SFs, although it is important to distinguish between active members and mobilizable constituencies. Most SFs are made up of HTAs, which usually send their main leader to represent them in front of the federation. The membership of HTAs belonging to a federation thus represents the total membership of the Federation. The largest federation identified for this research is the Zacatecan Federation of Southern California, which had 60 members in 2004. In contrast, the smallest, the *Asociación Potosina del Norte de Texas* (Northern Texas Potosina Association), had only seven members. Federation leaders argued that the reach of their organizations depends not only on the number of individual members in each HTA, but the number of people that each of those members can influence. None of the organizations keeps a record of how many people belong to the HTAs that constitute their federations. This makes it difficult to know with certainty the number of people they can actually reach. Most claimed to influence from one thousand for the smaller federations to twenty five thousand for the larger ones. While these numbers are certainly exaggerated, it is nonetheless true that these organizations have considerable ability to

mobilize first-generation Mexican immigrants for specific political causes on both sides of the border, particularly because they rely on strong networks built around family and other long-standing relationships.

SFs have affected electoral outcomes in certain Mexican states and municipalities. Some of the interviewees admitted, for example, that they had encouraged their members to call their family members in Mexico to urge them to vote for Fox during the 2000 Mexican presidential elections[79]. It is important to note, however, that the organizations that have real grass-roots bases are the HTAs and not the federations themselves. As a former president of a federation from Guerrero argued, the SFs are quite loose organizations whose strength depends on the vigor of the HTAs that belong to them.

Other organizations based on state of origin but that do not operate as SFs have an obviously lesser impact within the Mexican community. These cases are *sui generis* and difficult to characterize. Some have an individual membership structure such as *Durango Unido*[80] in Chicago that claimed to have 300 members, although only around 150 were active at the time of the research. *La Familia Nuevo León* in Dallas claimed 200 members, although only around 8 were active. Others do not have an explicit membership structure. For example, *Casa Puebla* in New York falls into this category

[79] There are still no studies evaluating the real influence that Mexican emigrants had on Fox's and other sub-national and local elections, so it is difficult to conclude the extent to which SFs can influence elections. An article in the *Financial Times* about the gubernatorial election in Zacatecas in July 2004 argued that emigrants had an important effect in helping the winning PRD candidate, Amalia Garcia, by placing thousands of phone calls to their family members living in the state from Chicago, Los Angeles and Dallas (Silver and Authers 2004). Also, it is worth noting that many political candidates from states with relatively high levels of emigration consider the federations as important actors which is reflected in the frequent visits they pay to those organizations during their campaigns. In some cases, furthermore, the leaders of these organizations have become political candidates themselves, for example Martín Carvajal, president of the Zacatecan Federation in Dallas, who became the PRD mayor of his hometown, Apulco, in 2004.

[80] After I conducted my field work *Durango Unido* was divided and a new organization from Durango in Chicago emerged as the *Federación de Duranguenses del Medio Oeste* (see Chapter 6)

but nonetheless claimed to have 45 committees and to work with 36 organizations in the New York Metropolitan area.

The political and civic organizations have less explicit membership policies and their influence within the Mexican immigrant community in the United States is much more difficult to evaluate. Some groups with an original political profile had an individual membership policy. This was the case of CDPME, which had around 50 active members, and *Mexicanos Unidos,* which had eight. Others had collective membership policies such as Confemex and the CPFLA.

The CDPME is a fairly new organization that has acquired, nonetheless, important political standing in Mexico. Among other things, it was pivotal in the negotiation of the initiative presented by the Fox administration to the Mexican Congress to implement the right to vote from abroad[81]. It also lobbied for final approval of this measure. Its influence is related to the educational backgrounds and political experience of its members[82]. The group's activists live mainly in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Tucson. Others are Mexican scholars that have useful political connections in Mexico. Members engage in frequent exchanges through an internet discussion list that is open only to those committed to regular participation. Decisions taken there are presented for discussion by another internet group whose membership criterion is less restrictive. The leaders of

[81] The main issues of the initiative (Presidencia 2004) to implement the right to vote from abroad were originally proposed by this organization. Also, prior to the presentation of the initiative in June 2004, the deputy Secretary of Interior, José Francisco Paoli Bolio, made various trips to the United States to "consult" the Mexican community. These trips were coordinated with the CDPME, which sent its members to each of the discussions in the different cities. This generated a lot of anger among the members of the political commission of the Consultative Council of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad since they were not brought into these discussions although the council was the official institution that the Mexican government established to mediate between émigrés and the Mexican state.

[82] This organization could not have exercised influence in Mexico if favorable political conditions had not existed. As discussed in Chapter 3, it is in a context in which many Mexican political actors and authorities have shown an interest in incorporating expatriates into Mexico's political life

many organizations belong to the latter list, including state federations and civic groups. Through these activities CDPME helped forge a consensus among the emerging Mexican leadership around the need of obtaining political rights in the homeland.

In contrast to the CDPME, *Mexicanos Unidos* in Dallas operates mostly locally. Although one of its primary concerns was to obtain political rights in Mexico, the organization lacked the leadership resources of the CDPME. With fewer members, most of its activities have had to do with the political participation of Mexicans in Dallas. On occasion the group joined demonstrations against the Mexican consulate and the Mexican government. *Mexicanos Unidos* has links with the PRD and helped the party establish a base in Dallas. Thus, the CDPME and *Mexicanos Unidos* are distinct associations, one with a national and the other a local scope.

CPFLA and Confemex constitute yet another style of political organization. They grew out of the SF's in Los Angeles and Chicago, respectively. Properly speaking, they are confederations and demonstrate the extent to which first-generation Mexican organizations have tended to overlap and develop links among themselves. In a way, they imply a process of maturation: their leaders have gradually realized that living conditions in Mexico and the United States will not change until Mexican expatriates get involved in political developments of both places. These organizations have few active members. However, their potential influence is quite large if they are able to mobilize all the people that belong to the SFs and, by implication, the HTAs that make up these organizations. They produced position papers on political and economic developments in Mexico and the United States and they operated campaigns to mobilize the Mexican vote in Chicago and Los Angeles during the 2004 US presidential election. CPFLA also played a

prominent role in mobilizing Hispanic voters in favor of Antonio Villarraigosa in 2005 and was also a pivotal actor in the city's pro-immigrant rallies on March and May 2006.

The civic organizations identified in this research have much less clear membership policies. Usually, they have a staff of one to four persons who receive a salary or are volunteers (usually interns) that work regularly in the provision of services for immigrants. The *Concilio Hispano* in Chicago charges a reduced fee on the services it provides and the people that receive these services are considered members of the organization. Similarly, *Cecomex*, in New York, charges forty dollars a year for its services and those who pay are identified as members. In contrast, the *Centro Comunitario Mexicano* (Mexican Community Center) does not have a structured membership policy. An eight-person board of directors, which includes respected members of the Dallas Mexican community, takes decisions and provides services to the general community without requiring membership.

As is evident from these examples, civic organizations tend not to have members that clearly identify with them. Nonetheless, their direct contact with the immigrant community, particularly with the undocumented, gives them significant clout even though they are not very representative organizations. This facilitates their ability to organize the community around specific causes. For example, the president of *Concilio Hispano* was once able to gather more than three thousand people to demonstrate in front of the *Chicago Tribune* offices because of stories portraying the Mexican community in a negative light.

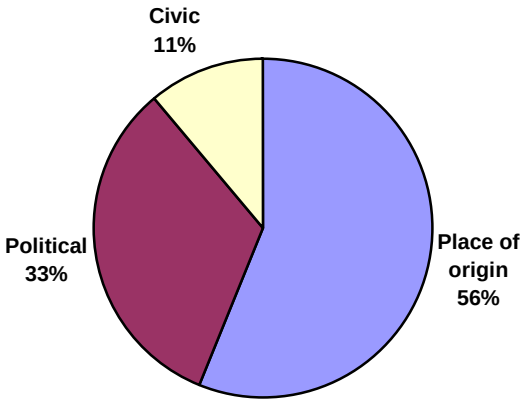
4.2.3.2 Leadership Structure

Organizations that elect their members democratically have a higher level of institutionalization because periodic changes of leaders indicate that the group can survive regardless of the specific personalities in charge. Democratic elections and the alternation of power also show that the organization can survive many of the divisions that leadership competitions generate. Furthermore, the election of leaders through democratic means reflects to a certain extent a process of learning of political values of the host country and, thus, some sort of incorporation into the adopted society. This is especially likely considering that most Mexican émigrés left their country when clientelism was the predominant characteristic of the political system. This assertion cannot, however, be taken too far because some types of organizations are more compatible with democratic structures than others. Furthermore, given that most of the work of these organizations is voluntary and carried out by people who have other jobs, it is clear than in some cases there are not enough people available to replace the current leaders. Many organizations are still in a formative period and are highly dependent on the work of a few. If they retire, the probability of organizational survival is low.

Regarding the leadership selection process, 53% of the organizations choose their leaders through some sort of democratic procedure, while 47% do not. Of those that select their leaders democratically, 56% are based on place of origin, 33% are political, and only 11% are civic (see Figure 4.7). Among the organizations based on place of origin, the SFs tend to be most democratic. Although the data I produced here are too limited to support strong generalizations, I believe this is the case because they have a larger leadership pool, have received support from Mexican officials in writing

democratic constitutions, and since they are older have had more time to change leaders. Overall, SFs are the most institutionalized first-generation Mexican organizations.

Figure 4.7: Type of organizations selecting leaders democratically



Most political organizations are issue organizations[83] and depend on a few leaders who established them. In general terms, the leaders of these organizations tend to think that no one is better qualified than themselves to run things and, therefore, there are no formal statutes governing leadership changes. However, some political organizations elect their leaders through some sort of democratic processes (Confemex and CPFLA in Chicago and Los Angeles, respectively). The CDPME does not properly elect its leadership through a democratic process, although every decision taken by the organization, including who should lead it, is amply discussed over the Internet.

[83] In a follow up talk in July 2004 in New York City, a leader from the CDPME explained that they were a single-issue organization because "we have learned from the Americans that this is what works best to advance a specific goal. If we work with many goals at a time it is difficult to achieve anything." In 2006, after Mexicans abroad were granted the right to vote in presidential elections, this organization turned its attention to the US by issuing a proposal to reform the immigration system.

Civic organizations are the least democratic, probably because they require their leaders to be committed full-time to the organization. In some cases, such as *Asociación Tepeyac*, they are economically and institutionally dependent on other bodies that actually decide who will lead them; in the case of *Tepeyac* it is the Catholic Church.

4.2.3.3 Leadership Identity

Leadership identity is important because it gives an idea of how post-IRCA Mexican leaders think of themselves, as well as the ways they may help construct and mobilize the identity of the first-generation. It also indicates what kind of relationships they may establish with other ethnic groups in the United States, specifically Mexican-Americans with whom they would be expected to have a natural connection since they share a similar origin.

I asked leaders whether they identified mainly as Mexicans, Mexican-Americans or Americans. While I did not ask them a direct question about their immigration status, it became evident that most of them had already acquired United States citizenship or could have access to it if they wished. I received varied responses, but almost all the interviewees disliked the idea of identifying themselves as Mexican-Americans. Practically, this was an expected response because Mexican-Americans are routinely thought of as people born in the United States of Mexican descent. Technically, however, any person of Mexican origin who naturalizes as a United States citizen could identify herself or himself as a Mexican-American. What is interesting about their answers is the negative view they displayed. A common response was that Mexican-Americans have rejected their Mexican heritage or felt guilty about it. The most common identification was “Mexican”. This, however, does not mean that they rejected an American identity.

On the contrary, many of them said that they felt Mexican but also American and in most cases they expressed respect and loyalty for their adopted country. In summary, most leaders identified first as Mexicans and then as Americans but not as Mexican-Americans. This points towards the possibility that they may adopt a different strategy of incorporation than that embraced by Mexican-Americans. While the latter have attempted to demonstrate that their loyalty belongs exclusively to the United States, post-IRCA Mexican immigrants recognize and assume as unproblematic the possibility of dual loyalties and identities, and they do not think that their loyalty to Mexico brings into question their loyalty to the United States. This may be consistent with the general attitude they have adopted of claiming political rights in their homeland–that is attempting to incorporate there—but assuming that they also deserve political rights in their host country.

From this we may also surmise that the relationship between first-generation Mexican leaders and Mexican-Americans may be contentious. However, this conclusion should be assessed with care because most leaders recognize that to advance their political goals in the United States they need to work with Mexican-Americans. The predominant view was that although they had different political priorities and views toward Mexico than Mexican-Americans[84], they needed to learn from the experiences of the latter. In follow up interviews during the summer of 2004 it became evident that some

[84] Mexican-Americans and first-generation Mexican immigrants hold different positions about engagement in Mexico's political life. While Mexican-Americans see the policy of rapprochement adopted by the Mexican government in a positive light, and they in a way requested and promoted it, they generally rejected the idea of obtaining political rights in Mexico because they thought it had the potential of creating doubts about their loyalty to the United States. In contrast, post-IRCA first-generation Mexican immigrants had as one of their main goals obtaining political rights in their homeland. It is important to point out, however, than on March 2004 The league Of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) seems to have reversed its opposition to obtaining political rights in Mexico, when it endorsed the goal of obtaining the right to vote from abroad advocated by the CDPME (interview with a leader of the CDPME in March 2004).

organizations, particularly State Federations in Chicago and Los Angeles, were already developing ties with Mexican-American organizations. Mexican-American organizations that originally ignored first-generation Mexican organizations realize that they need to develop ties with them to increase their appeal within the first-generation Mexican community. At the same time, Mexican organizations, particularly the SFs and others based on state of origin, have turned their attention to the United States and, therefore, they have become more interested in working with Mexican-American organizations[85].

Leaders of political organizations, particularly those that do not derive from the federations, are more likely to identify only as Mexicans. Leaders of HTAs and SFs as well as civic organizations, tend to identify both as Mexicans and as Americans. This may be explained in part by the different life experiences of the leaders. Most leaders of HTAs, SFs and similar organizations arrived in the United States when they were relatively young and typically from rural areas. Many were originally without documents, but were able to acquire a legal status in the 1980s and 1990s through IRCA or through other legislative means. Having lived almost all of their adult lives in the United States, they learned new skills and adopted many American values. Many of them became successful by supplying services or selling goods mostly within the ethnic enclave, although a few worked for American companies or were professionals. Although they feel connected to Mexico, and particularly to their places of origin, they also feel attached to their adopted country.

Leaders of civic organizations tend to come more from the Mexican middle class (in most cases with professional degrees) and thus have had less difficulty gaining

[85] Interviews with Mexican leaders during the meeting of the Consultative Council of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad showed that organizations in Los Angeles and Chicago were now working with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (Maldef).

acceptance in American society, in the first place because they typically arrived legally. They have seen the hard times that many undocumented Mexicans confront in the United States and have focused on helping them to cope. Since the organizations they lead are focused on the host country, they think that becoming American is important and they value that identity. Since they were born in Mexico, however, and probably earned their professional degrees in Mexican institutions, it is also evident that they identify with Mexico.

Leaders of political organizations, in contrast, were in most cases politically active in Mexico (e.g. members of a union, student movement or political party) and this experience may be connected to their migration process. Therefore, they are more interested in political developments in Mexico than in the United States and embrace a predominantly Mexican identity.

4.2.3.4 Leadership Experience

Leaders do not emerge in a vacuum. It takes time for an immigrant group to produce leaders able to articulate and advance their interests. Leaders of political organizations have had the greatest political experience, in most cases prior to their arrival in the United States. This is the case of members of the CDPME and CIME. Leaders of HTAs, SFs and similar organizations, in contrast, acquired their leadership skills mostly through participation in those organizations, a reason they have been slower in developing a strong public profile. During the interviews it became evident that on many occasions these leaders relied on previous experiences of community involvement. Some of the interviewees, for example, had been on local school boards and chambers of commerce or had served on their city councils. For example, the president of *Durango*

Unido in Chicago was at the time of the interview (October 2001) a member of the local school board and had been previously the president of the Pilsen Chamber of Commerce. He also had participated in a program organized by the Chicago Police to fight crime. Others have been involved in community activities organized by the local churches. In some cases, even if the interviewees themselves had not been directly involved in local community activities, they belonged to organizations that had.

Leaders of civic organizations typically got involved with the Mexican community through their professional activities. For example, the president of the *Centro Comunitario Mexicano* in Dallas and of *Casa Mexico* and *Mixteca Organization Inc.* in Metropolitan New York did not have any direct political experience in Mexico or the United States, but have been active in professional associations or in local institutions (e.g. school boards, or city councils).

4.2.4 Fund Raising Capacity and Legal Status of the Organization

First-generation Mexican organizations have as one of the main activities raising funds to invest in their hometowns and many have been quite effective. Despite this, they are often unstable because they have not been able to establish a secure and diversified source of income. Those organizations based on the state of origin and civic activities rely for the most part on the monetary contributions of their members. Political organizations, in contrast, do not have any identified sources of income and their members have to finance their own expenses.

Of the thirty-four organizations identified for this research, only three have applied for and obtained external grants. These are *Fundación Mexico*, based in Tucson but considered in this project because its membership extends to the cities I studied,

Asociación Tepeyac in New York and the Zacatecan Federation of Southern California. In the last case they were able to get support for two years from the Rockefeller Foundation (Imagen 2004).

In a few cases, state-of-origin organizations receive economic support from the governments of their states, for example *Casa Guanajuato* in Dallas and the Federation of United Zacatecan Clubs in Illinois. In both cases, this support was crucial to their growth and viability. *Asociación Tepeyac* has also received important financial support from the archdiocese of New York, including a building in lower Manhattan. These cases, however, are more the exception than the rule.

4.2.4.1 Non-Profit Status

In the United States most organizations that attend to community needs apply for a non-profit status with the Internal Revenue Service so that they can avoid being taxed on the money they raise and obtain external resources from foundations and corporations. Of the thirty-four organizations studied here, nine had obtained non-profit status at the time of the research and five others had applied for it. Of the nine that had obtained non-profit status, 56% were State Federations/HTAs and 44% were civic organizations. Only three non-profits, the *Asociación Tepeyac*, *Fundación Mexico* and the *Zacatecan Federation of Southern California* were able to raise external resources in the United States.

The adoption of a non-profit status has had unexpected results. Among other things, it has affected the way these organizations talk about and participate in politics. Non-profit status requires avoiding partisan politics and direct political activities. This, however, does not mean that non-profits do not act politically. For example, occasionally

they may host events with prospective or actual candidates for governors of their states of origin but present these events as educational rather than political. In general, political attitudes tend to be presented as individually rather than organizationally adopted.

Non-profit HTAs and SFs tend to be more cautious about participating in political activities in the United States than in Mexico. This is probably because their members perceive that any political action towards their host country could be more easily detected than that taken towards their homeland. Since most of them have assumed a non-profit status fairly recently, the long-term effects are unclear. Certainly, the tax exempt status creates a negative incentive to be involved in voter registration campaigns[86]. Some organizations, however, have found creative solutions to this dilemma. For example, the members of the Zacatecan Federation of Southern California created a new, separate organization focused only on political activities called the *Frente Cívico Zacatecano*. Although it emerged as a result of political divisions within the federation during the 1998 gubernatorial election in Zacatecas, the creation of the *Frente Cívico* actually allowed organized Zacatecans in Los Angeles to develop an open bi-national political agenda. The effectiveness of this organization in advancing political goals (e.g. it successfully promoted a pro-immigrant law in Zacatecas) has made it a model for other organizations. The CPFLA, for example, was created following the format of the *Frente Cívico*.

[86] This status, for instance, forces them to avoid any direct or indirect participation or intervention in any political campaign for or against any candidate for public office (see www.t-tlaw.com/np-01b.htm). However, it does not prohibit them from urging their members to register and vote as long as they do not take any position, publish or distribute any statements made in connection with a specific campaign.

4.2.5 Political Leverage

So far, I have described the emergence and general characteristics of a sample of first-generation Mexican organizations in the United States, as well as some of their resource mobilization capacities. Among other things I have shown that in most cases these organizations emerged as a result of a direct involvement of homeland political actors and officials, or in reaction to host or home state policies. The interaction of these organizations with their home state political dynamics and political and administrative officials has politicized many of them. Therefore, organizations that were not originally political have acquired an explicit or implicit political focus. As they have become more sophisticated and more autonomous from homeland authorities, some organizations that were not originally focused on the United States have started to develop new activities aimed at their host country. These include the provision of services to their members and the local Mexican community to facilitate their adaptation. In addition, some of them, specifically organizations based on the state of origin, have started to articulate a political agenda focused on advancing their interest in the United States. These processes have been facilitated by the development of leadership resources that were unavailable to the Mexican immigrant community prior to the 1986 amnesty, and of the policies of rapprochement adopted by Mexico towards its expatriates.

The political agenda this new leadership has been articulating attempts to differentiate between the interests of the Mexican immigrant community and those of Mexican-Americans. Overall, most Mexican leaders interviewed for this research do not identify as Mexican-Americans. Nonetheless, they seem to understand that the latter could be an important political ally. Despite their interest in developing a politically active profile in

the United States, Mexican organizations have a limited capacity to raise external financial resources. Others have failed to develop a fully democratic structure to guarantee their survival in the long run. So far, many of them still have a leadership structure dominated by a few actors that block the arrival of new persons to the higher positions, very much in the same way that cliques have dominated many aspects of the community life in Mexico.

What are the capacities of these organizations to influence political events in their home and host countries? What links have they established with different political actors and organizations in Mexico and the United States? Have they been able to use these links to advance their autonomous interests and political agenda?

4.2.5.1 Links with the Mexican Government

Twenty-four of 34 organizations have an established relationship with the Mexican government, meaning that they have been in regular touch with authorities in Mexico[87], and have worked with them towards specific goals. Relationships tend to be with one specific level of government, either national or sub-national, although six organizations work with both. Organizations based on the state of origin tend, obviously, to lean predominantly towards the sub-national level, although some organizations such as the Zacatecan Federation of Southern California have become so strong that they also have assured access to federal authorities.

In most cases, the relationship that organizations based on the state of origin have with sub-national authorities is more or less positive, although in some instances it has been predominantly conflictive. This is the case of the *Federación de Clubes*

[87] All the organizations have been in touch at some point or another with the Mexican consulates in the respective cities, but these contacts will be discussed in the next chapter.

Jaliscienses, based in Los Angeles, which for many years had a difficult relationship with the government of Jalisco. Since the PRI administration of Guillermo Cossio Vidaurri (1989-1992), there had been numerous complaints by municipal authorities that the money the *Jaliscienses* abroad invested in the state benefited local churches. This probably would not have worried PAN officials due to the strong connections this party has with the Catholic Church but certainly was perceived as a problem by municipal authorities from the PRI, which was the predominant party in the state at the time. In 1994 the organization started to participate in a 3x1 program, in which every dollar it invested was equally matched by the Federal government, the state government, and the municipal government. When this program ended, they negotiated a 2x1 with the state and municipal governments but, again, this stimulated complaints from municipal authorities who argued that they had to redirect already assigned budgets to emigrants' demands and in the end they decided not to collaborate with the program. Along with constant departures of governors before their terms ended created a difficult relationship between the federation and the government of Jalisco. Zabin and Escala Rabadán (Zabin and Escala Rabada 1998) argue that these political problems made the federation from Jalisco less successful in promoting public work projects than those from Zacatecas.

The type of relationship that each organization establishes with sub-national authorities in Mexico affects their performance. At some points this relationship may strengthen the organization, while at others it certainly divides it. The Zacatecan federations in Los Angeles and Chicago for a long time enjoyed good relations with the state authorities. Both the PRI administrations of Genaro Borrego Estrada (1986-1992) and Arturo Romo Gutiérrez (1992-1998) worked to strengthen and institutionalize the

organizations. In both cases, these authorities expected the organizations to be allies of the government and their party (Moctezuma Longoria 2003). During all this time, the leadership of both organizations leaned towards the PRI. Finally, when in 1998 Ricardo Monreal Avila, an influential PRI politician, decided to run for governor as a PRD candidate, the federations, particularly the one from Los Angeles, split over whom to support. In this regard, these organizations basically reproduced for a while the political environment of the state, which was dominated by the PRI for many years, but later became more competitive. When he arrived in power, Monreal Avila also expected the loyalty of the federations. These, however, had learned the extent to which they could influence political events in the state and, thus, adopted a more autonomous position. Along with the *Frente Cívico Zacatecano*, which emerged from the divisions in the Los Angeles federation, these federations supported the candidacy of Andrés Bermudez, an emigrant from California, for mayor of Jeréz, and defended his triumph even when the local electoral authorities and the PRD governor argued that he could not take office due to legal technicalities. Afterwards, the *Frente Cívico*, with the support of the federations, designed and promoted the "migrant law" which, after being approved by the state Congress in 2003, allowed Zacatecans residing abroad to be elected to political positions in the state.

The Zacatecan example shows that a strong relationship with the sub-national authorities has helped some organizations become more institutionalized, which in turn has allowed them to become more autonomous and exercise more political leverage in their states of origin. What kind of relationships have Mexican organizations established with Mexican authorities at the federal level? Of the thirty-four organizations I studied,

thirteen have established some form of relationship with the Mexican government at the national level, meaning that they have contacts with officials at least from time to time. The main goal at the national level has been to obtain the right to vote from abroad. To achieve this, they have established ties with administrative officials, mostly from the interior ministry and the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), while lobbying members of Congress. Evidently they are not as close as the relationships the federations have established with sub-national authorities. At that level, immigrants have greater political leverage. At the national level, they may expect more from the authorities (e.g. make them act on specific legislation) than the authorities expect from them, which diminishes their ability to influence events. Nonetheless, the leverage they have is also determined by their importance for the government. For more than four decades, when the political system in Mexico was fairly closed to newcomers, emigrants were not able to exercise any influence on the government. As the political system liberalized, and they became more organized, their influence increased but it was still not strong enough to decisively affect political events. During the PRI governments of Carlos Salinas de Gortari and Ernesto Zedillo, various groupings lobbied for the right to vote from abroad to no avail. During the government of Vicente Fox, priorities changed and emigrants became an important pillar of his administration's political and foreign policy discourse. Does the achievement of voting rights for expatriates imply that they are more effectively organized than ever before? There are more migrant organizations focused on advancing a political agenda towards their homeland than there were a decade ago. Also, their actions are more institutionalized. Despite this, I believe that these groups are getting more attention from the Mexican government than their level of organization merits. A

follow up of these organizations has shown that their efforts are still mostly uncoordinated (although the CDPME has managed to unify some interests), and that they have not been able yet to create a cohesive front vis-à-vis their homeland, even though almost all the leadership of the organizations studied agreed than one of the major goals of Mexicans abroad should be to obtain political rights back home.

4.2.5.2 Links with Mexican Political Parties

Political leverage is also affected by the importance that other political actors, specifically political parties, assign to Mexican groups in the United States. Among the organizations I studied, at least thirteen have had some identifiable connection with one or more political parties, having explicitly or implicitly endorsed the candidate of a specific political party, having many of their members belong to a particular political party, or having established a strong association with a specific official who belongs to a party or faction.

4.2.5.3 Links with the American Government

Mexican organizations have not been as effective in establishing links with the American government at the national, state, or local levels as they have been with the Mexican government. While Mexican authorities tend to be involved in many activities of these organizations and pay frequent visits to them, the contacts of these groups with American authorities, even in the cities where they reside, tend to be limited. In fact, contacts with American authorities tend to take place only after an organization has been established for some time and local authorities have noticed it. Even so, seventeen of the associations I studied reported having been in touch with, and even supporting the

political campaigns of, local authorities and politicians. Most of these contacts were with city councilors, mayors, Hispanic assemblymen, and state Congressional delegations.

The organizations most active in this regard are those based on state of origin. The Zacatecan Federation of Southern California, along with the *Frente Cívico Zacatecano*, supported the campaigns of various local politicians and members of Congress in California. Other federations, such as the *Federación de Clubes Michoacanos en Illinois* and the *Federación de Clubes Unidos de Zacatecanos en Illinois*[88] placed a similar role. A former president of the latter organization has, on occasion, acted as a liaison between the Zacatecan government and the mayor of Chicago, while the president of the Zacatecan Federation of Southern California has done the same thing in California. These examples show that these organizations and their leaders have been gradually acquiring some presence in the host society and are being identified by local politicians and authorities as useful intermediaries with the constantly growing Mexican immigrant community.

The political organizations, particularly those focused on a single issue like the CDPME, did not report contacts with American officials, but this mostly reflects their single issue status and lack of need for such contacts. In contrast, political organizations that have more recently emerged from various efforts to coordinate the actions of SFs, such as the CPFMLA in California and Confemex in Chicago, principally pay attention to American politics and, thus, are working on building new ties with American officials. CPFMLA, for instance, established a strong relationship with Antonio Villaraigosa, the Los Angeles mayor, after it supported his campaign. Although these efforts are fairly

[88] In the cases in which they have a non-profit status, they participate in mobilizing the vote on an individual basis. This means the organization does not officially endorse any candidate in particular.

new, it is possible that these organizations may become important advocates of the Mexican immigrant community in the United States. Civic organizations, for their part, tend naturally to establish ties with local politicians and officials since their activities involve helping immigrants better adapt in the host country.

4.2.5.4 Links with Other Actors in the United States

To advance political goals in their host country, immigrant organizations require establishing alliances with other groups. Important potential allies include ethnic and other immigrant organizations, immigrant rights advocates, and unions. Overall, the organizations reviewed have not yet developed, with few exceptions, many links with other groups. Only nine organizations had established contacts with Mexican-American groups (e.g. LULAC, La Raza, Maldef and the National Association of Latino Elected Officials, or NALEO) and one had created some links with Dominican associations. These contacts had mostly resulted in invitations to attend meetings of these organizations or receiving leadership training from them. Overall, the organizations that have had the most contacts with these ethnic groupings are based on place of origin, particularly those in existence for at least a few years.

Links with unions have been more limited. Of the organizations based on state of origin only the Zacatecan Federation of Southern California and the political organization that emerged from it, the *Frente Cívico Zacatecano*, have worked in joint projects with the AFL-CIO. The *Frente* and the AFL-CIO, for example, collaborated in California in a campaign to broaden access to legal driver's licenses for undocumented Mexicans. Furthermore, both the Federation and the *Frente* have joined efforts with the AFL-CIO to promote the legalization of undocumented Mexicans. These examples, however, are more

the exception than the rule. Why are links with unions so limited? The main reason that emerged from the data is that few leaders of first-generation Mexican organizations have much connection to unionized labor or union life. Few obtained employment in unionized blue-collar jobs, but instead ran small businesses or were professionals. Despite this situation, the recent decision of the AFL-CIO to support the legalization of undocumented workers and the fact that some immigrant organizations are becoming more oriented toward American politics, may eventually foster more intensive connections between Mexican immigrant organizations and unions.

Most civic organizations have no discernible relationships with Mexican-American organizations or with trade unions. Some have established links with pro-immigrant rights organizations in those places where they operate, or at the national level. For example, the *Centro Comunitario Mexicano* in Dallas has been working with Dallas International, a pro-immigrant organization, on social, medical and legal assistance projects that benefit Mexican and Latino residents of the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Meanwhile, *Asociación Tepeyac* belongs to the National Coalition for Amnesty and Dignity whose main goal is obtaining permanent residency for all undocumented workers living in the United States.

As they have been gradually turning their attention to the host country, organizations based on their place of origin have also been establishing links with pro-immigrant groups in the places were they operate. This is the case of the *Federación de Clubes Unidos de Zacatecanos en Illinois,* which has worked along the Illinois Coalition for Immigrants and Refugees and the Heartland Alliance in projects that support immigrant rights. Overall, however, to be effective first-generation Mexican

organizations have to develop more ties with pro-immigrant organizations. At the time of my research, only eight out of the thirty-four organizations had done so.

4.2.6 Effects on Incorporation

One of the major interests of this research project is the role that first-generation Mexican organizations in the United States are playing in motivating the political incorporation of migrants in the USA and Mexico. Since the situation is still unfolding, the data and analysis support only tentative conclusions. The effects these organizations have on the incorporation of Mexicans can be derived by implication from the specific positions and activities these organizations have developed towards this end.

4.2.6.1 Incorporating into the Homeland Polity

Almost all the organizations agreed on obtaining political rights in their home polity, because most emigrants left the country more or less involuntarily due to a lack of economic opportunities and their families still live there. By exercising political rights in their homeland they hope to influence Mexican emigration policies.

Broad agreement on this subject, however, does not translate into united action. Not all the organizations publicly promoted the incorporation of Mexicans into their homeland polity and, among those that did, there was considerable variation in the level of commitment. The leadership of civic organizations such as *Asociación Tepeyac*, *Cecomex, Casa Mexico* in the New York Metropolitan area and the *Centro Comunitario Mexicano* in Dallas belonged to the internet list created by the CDPME to promote the interests of Mexicans abroad; they even had signed petitions supporting votes from abroad; nevertheless, these leaders and their organizations were not really actively involved in these campaigns.

What about organizations based on state of origin? Most of these certainly have concentrated their efforts on the homeland. HTAs and SFs, for example had as their original goal to boost economic vitality in their hometowns and states of origin. These activities led to the acquisition of political influence at home. For instance, it was not rare for presidents of HTAs to be nominated for political office in their places of origin since the financial resources they directed back home earned them the respect of the local population. This was the case of the president of the *Federación de Zacatecanos del Norte de Texas*, who as president of a HTA was nominated as a PRI pre-candidate for the municipal presidency of his hometown in the mid-1990s[89]. It was through their continuous contacts with Mexican administrative authorities and politicians that these organizations started to articulate demands of their states of origin. Their opinions and suggestions started to be incorporated into the political platforms of those candidates for political office who sought their endorsement. Thus, even before the right to vote was approved in 2005, they wielded a veto over potential candidates. Finally, the links that many of these organizations have established with other political organizations pushed them to adopt more explicit political goals and become involved in lobbying campaigns for political rights in Mexico. In addition, immigrants from Zacatecas and Michoacan also designed or endorsed laws that attempted to achieve their final incorporation in the polities of their states[90].

[89] This person did not win those elections at that time. However, in July 2004, thanks to the finally approved Migrant Law promoted by the Zacatecans in the United States (which allowed Zacatecans to compete for political office in their state of origin without the requirement of having to reside there for a specific time), he finally won the elections for the Municipal presidency of Apulco (his hometown), now as a PRD candidate see (Silver and Authers 2004).

[90] The Zacatecans promoted the Ley Migrante mentioned in the previous footnote, which was finally approved in 2003, while the Michoacanos endorsed an initiative promoted by the PRD governor Lázaro Cárdenas Batel to grant them the right to vote from abroad, and be elected for Congress through the local party list.

Other organizations have been less active in the politics of their states. This has to do with the fact that they have not developed the institutional capacity that the Zacatecans and Michoacanos had built in the last few years, but also that the leadership of these organizations and their members may not be as interested, in some cases because they are drawn from a different demographic pool. For example, the leadership and members of *Durango Unido* are predominantly small businessmen and physicians who are well adapted to American society and have limited emotional connections to Durango.

In general, those organizations that have been more actively advancing the interests of expatriates towards their homeland have had a political profile from the beginning. Not all these organizations are effective, however. CIME, for example, was created with a lot of fanfare and expectations, but internal divisions caused it to lose much of the intermediation capacity it had won with Mexican authorities. Probably the most efficient group was the CDPME because its pragmatic and flexible structure diminished the chances for divisions.

4.2.6.2 Incorporating into the Host Polity

Voting rights from abroad gave Mexican organizations in the United States a common theme around which to organize, but no similar issue has galvanized their stance vis-à-vis politics in the United States prior to the Sensenbrenner bill (see Chapter 2). Although most of the interviewees had little difficulty discussing strategies with regard to politics in Mexico, they had more difficulty talking about politics in the United States.

Despite this, most of them agreed that the main challenge for the Mexican immigrant community in the United States is to secure legal status for the undocumented both through adjusting the status of those already residing in the US and providing a legal

means for the entry of future migrants. If large numbers of Mexicans lack legal status, the community will have a hard time obtaining real political representation. As a former president of a federation from Guerrero put it,

> all the troubles we face in the United States: lack of access to driver's licenses and to higher education for those undocumented, health problems, deaths at the border and more, are the result of a lack of a migratory agreement. Therefore, our first goal should be to address this issue.

Although many Mexican immigrants are now legally settled in the United States, including most if not all of the leaders interviewed for this research, many more are not. Families are commonly divided between those members who have legal status and those who do not. For this reason, it is obvious why the immigration issue ranked first among the interviewees when they thought about politics in the United States.

Nevertheless, there was little agreement as to which was the best way to solve the immigration problem. Some preferred an incremental approach, starting with a regularization program that would grant resident immigrants legal status but not citizenship rights, which they thought Congress would reject. Others argued that a blanket amnesty similar to that adopted in 1986 was the only way to solve the problem.

While most leaders had an opinion about this subject, not many of the organizations they led had participated in concrete actions in favor of an amnesty or a regularization program. Of the thirty-four organizations, only thirteen had been involved in demonstrations or lobbying campaigns in favor of an amnesty or a plan to regularize immigrants. Among those, only a few had been consistently involved in that respect. The most evident case was that of *Asociación Tepeyac*, which got the attention of the

Mexican and American press by running four years in a row (2002-2005) the *Antorcha Guadalupana* (Guadalupan Torch) race from Mexico City to Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. During the race, in which many young runners participated, immigrants ask the Virgin of Guadalupe to help them obtain permanent legal status in the United States.

Other organizations attempted to address the problems that undocumented workers confront by providing services to them and advocating in favor of more specific issues such as supporting the Dream Act, which if approved by Congress would put the non-American children of undocumented Mexicans on the same footing as American citizens in respect to college tuition and financial aid. The most active organizations in this respect were those with a civic profile, although some SFs and other organizations based on the state of origin also participated.

By 2006 conditions changed. The approval of the Sensenbrenner bill in the House and the possibility that the Senate could approve a similar bill (see Chapter 2) mobilized immigrants as never before. In this context many of the organizations that I studied became active participants in the rallies that were held in many American cities. Follow up interviews I conducted with leaders in Los Angeles showed that they were involved in organizing the rallies and in trying to put together a coalition to advance a pro-immigrant agenda. This was the case of CFPLA. CONFEMEX played a similar role in Chicago. How successful their efforts will be is difficult to know. It will certainly take a lot of work by immigrant organizations and they will have not only to design a common agenda but also control potential divisions.

Meanwhile, first-generation organizations have been indirectly supporting the incorporation process by providing services primarily but not exclusively geared towards the undocumented. These services include English as a second language courses, activities for children, orientation about health services and others. Furthermore, some organizations such as *Fundación México* and various state federations organize conferences, talks and discussion groups to foster greater political consciousness.

What about activities geared at helping in the adaptation and incorporation of the second generation? Organizations have started to direct attention toward the second generation. For example, various organizations have established scholarship programs to guarantee that successful high-school graduates can attend college. In addition, at least two organizations--the Zacatecan Federation from Southern California and the Zacatecans from Illinois--created youth programs aimed at helping the children of Zacatecans born in the United States develop leadership skills.

In summary, although first-generation Mexican organizations still have a long way to go, there are signs that they are gradually making meaningful contributions towards the adaptation of Mexicans in the United States. They do so either indirectly through the provision of services and activities for the first and second generation, or directly, by participating in political activities.

4.3 The Consultative Council of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad: A Potential Transnational Front?

As part of its policy towards expatriates the Mexican government created the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IMA) in 2002 with the goal of addressing the needs of Mexicans living in the United States and Canada. The Institute includes a consultative

body–the Consultative Council--whose charge is to give voice to emigrants and their offspring as to what the Mexican government should do to help Mexicans abroad better adapt in their country of residence as well as to participate in the economic and political life of their homeland. This body is composed of 105 Mexican leaders from the United States selected through more or less democratic processes implemented in American and Canadian cities. In addition, it includes 10 councilors who belong to major Latino and Mexican-American organizations, 10 special advisors selected by the Mexican government, and 32 representatives from the different Mexican states.

The Consultative Council provides the first opportunity for many Mexican leaders from different American cities to interact and exchange ideas and experiences. It also signifies a unique chance for them to acquire an unified voice. Thanks to the Council, Mexican leaders in the United States are building, with more efficiency than ever, important links and networks. For all these reasons I include a brief analysis of the leadership of the council, specifically from the 105 selected in different cities. I believe that the information provided here complements the data about first-generation organizations provided in this chapter.

Information provided by the IMA on 101 of the 105 members selected by Mexican communities in the United States shows that 70% were born in Mexico. Thus the Council includes both Mexican and Mexican-American leaders. Despite this, a bi-national study of the Council, whose preliminary results were presented in a meeting of the body in Atlanta, Georgia on May 21st 2004[91], shows that although many councilors

[91] The study was conducted in November 2003 during the second general meeting of the *Consejo* in Mexico City by the International Relations Department of the *Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México* (ITAM), the Center for the Study of Los Angeles of Loyola Marymount University, The Center for

believe that Latinos should work together, many others (presumably born in Mexico although not clarified in the preliminary report) expressed strong criticisms of Mexican-American leaders born in the United States. Their main objection is that they are not sufficiently interested in immigration matters and developments in Mexico. These criticisms against Mexican-American leaders also emerged during the meeting in Atlanta at the formal presentation of the report and in personal talks with different members. This is consistent with the information I presented that showed that the leaders of the first-generation organizations generally dislike being labeled as Mexican-Americans. Despite this, I did not notice that criticisms against Mexican-Americans affected the working relationships between Mexican and Mexican-American leaders. The presence of Mexican-American councilors, for instance, seemed to be useful because their more extensive experience helped moderate the terms of discussion during the seminars in Atlanta. For example, one of the most important working committees of the council, that on political strategies, was led by a Mexican-American woman from California who supported voting rights from abroad, but also reminded members of the importance of participating in campaigns such as that in support of the Dream Act.

Those council members born in Mexico had lived in the USA an average of 21 years. This means that they belong to a political and economic class of Mexican immigrants that emerged in the wake of the implementation of IRCA. Although the legal status of the councilors was not reported, it is obvious from talks with Mexican officials that the majority of them hold United States citizenship or at least permanent residency. I was able to identify only one member of the council that was undocumented.

Mexican American Studies of the University of Texas at Arlington, and the Institute for Latino Studies of Notre Dame University

Regarding their activities and working lives, 51% belong to an organization (including many from SFs and civic organizations). The rest reported that they were small businessmen or professionals, probably many of them active in their local communities. This further confirms that they constitute a group of immigrants that have settled in their host country and have the time and means to demand a voice in what happens in Mexico and the United States.

With respect to their predominant concerns, observing their general meetings and those of the specialized committees (besides the political committee there are Economic and Business Issues, Education, Legal, and Health, Culture, and Border Committees) I noticed that their interests are geared towards both Mexico and the United States. Obtaining the right to vote in Mexican elections was an issue that emerged again and again in discussions during the meeting (a right that they finally obtained a year later), in great part because speakers in the general meetings organized by the Mexican government dealt with this issue. However, they were also highly interested in finding ways to finance community development projects and in proposing solutions to the illegal immigration problem. Their concerns about the future of the second generation were also evident, as well as about methods to address major health problems that afflict Mexicans in the United States. Openly political issues regarding the United States emerged in their discussions, particularly those of the political committee, although not as frequently as those about Mexico. However, we need to consider that the main interlocutor of their discussions was the Mexican government. It is likely that if the United States created a similar institution many of their demands would be geared towards their host country. From what I observed in the meetings, the councilors were vocal towards Mexico, in

great part because they were encouraged by the many Mexican officials who participated in the events, including very high-level officials such as the foreign minister and Congressmen representing Mexican political parties.

CHAPTER 5

THE POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES OF DALLAS, CHICAGO, NEW YORK AND LOS ANGELES AND MEXICAN MIGRATION

5.1 Introduction

In the next two chapters I look at the process of political incorporation of Mexicans in the urban centers where they have settled, including Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York[92]. I identify the specific characteristics of Mexican organization and mobilization in each locality. To what extent do local structures of opportunity affect the patterns of incorporation of Mexicans in each city? Are there distinctive patterns in the processes of political incorporation of Mexicans in those places that show that local structures and dynamics are as relevant as those at the national level in determining immigrant incorporation? Are Mexicans mobilizing and organizing in the same ways in

[92] When referring to the cities of Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas and New York, I am always considering their metropolitan areas since many Mexicans live in the outskirts of those cities or in suburban areas near by. In my analysis of the local political opportunity structures and how they affect the dynamics of the organizations, however, I will constrain my analysis mostly to the cities themselves for two reasons: first, due to the difficulty of analyzing the political dynamics that Mexicans may face in the different suburban entities where they have settled; and second, because in most cases, their daily lives (e.g. where they work) and organizational activities unfold around those cities. The metropolitan area of Chicago includes: Chicago, Illinois-Gary, Indiana-Lake County, and Wisconsin. For New York: New York- Northern New Jersey, Long Island, and Connecticut. For Los Angeles it means a five county region including Los Angeles County, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Ventura. For Dallas it encompasses the counties of Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant were Forth Worth is situated.

all these cities? If not, what are the differences and their causes? What are the main challenges these organizations confront? By posing these questions, I attempt to uncover the extent to which variations in local opportunity structures affect immigrant mobilization and organization.

I present a short review of each city's opportunity structure including: (1) the political culture, which can be more or less inclusive; and (2) the institutional design which may encompass either a reform system or one dominated by political machines, the presence or absence of partisan elections, and at large or district elections. I also consider the history and characteristics of its Mexican community. I will show that Mexican immigrants have confronted major obstacles in all four localities that have deterred their political participation and that go beyond the obvious limitations created by their immigration and citizenship status. Because of this, their primary focus is Mexico. As Koopmans argues, "there is a strong and positive relation between the inclusiveness of local incorporation regimes and the degree to which immigrants participate proactively on public debates on issues concerning them" (Koopmans 2004). In localities in which immigrants have few channels of access to the decision-making process they tend to orient their political goals towards their country of origin. Yet, local opportunity structures also affect variations in predominant types, strengths and quality of associations. These involve specific opportunities available in each city including chances to be involved with institutions such as school boards, the police, and city councils. In addition, they include the resources spent on facilitating the adaptation and integration of newcomers (e.g. on education, public health and other social programs)[93].

[93] Although local level institutions cannot determine the legal status of new immigrants, which is a key determinant in their incorporation process, they certainly can have a great influence in facilitating or

Other elements that influence the organization of immigrants at the local level are homeland institutions that usually interact with immigrants in the localities where they have settled. These include consulates and state governments. For instance, operating with a considerable autonomy from the federal government in Mexico and from the Mexican embassy in Washington D.C., consulate officials, state governors, and municipal presidents play a key role in mobilizing and organizing immigrants in different American cities and in shaping the characteristics of their associations.

Apart from local opportunity structures, I concentrate on two additional factors:

1) The particular characteristics of the immigrants settling in each locality, including their history, place of origin, timing of migration, longevity, predominant immigration status, social capital, and leadership resources.

2) The presence of other immigrant and ethnic groups and the relationships Mexicans establish with them. Successful organizations of other groups (e.g. Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans) in a particular city may serve as a model for Mexican immigrants to emulate. Eventually, they may become important allies. These groups, however, may also perceive Mexican immigrants as a threat and may attempt to undermine their organizing efforts.

---

inhibiting this process. For example, in the state of New York, George Pataki, interested in his reelection, facilitated the approval of a law, originally lobbied by a group of Mexican-American students, to allow undocumented Mexicans in the state to pay in-state tuition when they go to the University (Smith 2002). Decisions like this certainly will have an impact in the incorporation of Mexicans in New York and New York City, even if initially limited, since they promote better educational levels within this community and its social mobility. Another remarkable example, not studied in this work, is the decision taken by the educational authorities of Georgia, to send American school teachers to Mexico to learn Spanish and the history of Mexican immigration so that they can better help their Mexican origin students in Georgia (Zuniga and Rubén 2002).

5.2 The opportunity structures of Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York and the Incorporation of Mexicans

Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Dallas offer important contrasts and similarities in their political development and institutional design that have triggered or inhibited different modes of mobilization and incorporation of Mexicans. The first two cities, Chicago and New York, have relatively more inclusive polities whereas Los Angeles and Dallas are more exclusive. Both Chicago and New York are old industrial-era cities whose political systems were developed during a period in which large numbers of European immigrants were settling. These systems gradually integrated this influx, an experience that may account for their relative openness.

Los Angeles and Dallas, in contrast, flourished since the beginning of the 20th century under the domination of a white elite that itself migrated out of the East and Midwest. Created during the Progressive Era, the political institutions of these cities were designed to isolate the policy process from politics in order to dismantle or inhibit the emergence of corrupt party organizations–political machines--that thrived on immigrant votes in the older cities. For this purpose state legislatures took the budgeting and administration of some services "out of the hands of aldermen and city councils and put them under the control of boards dominated by a 'better class' of people" (Judd and Kantor 2006, p. 70). In Los Angeles citizens' commissions to manage city departments as well as a strong civil service system were established. In Dallas the Mayor-Commission form of government, later replaced by the Council-Manager form, was adopted. In addition, in both places voters replaced the ward system typical of Chicago and New York with at large elections (later changed back to district elections in Los

Angeles in 1925). Although these reform measures were not highly successful in diminishing corruption, they clearly constrained the entrance of newcomers into the system. Due to them, and the fact that they were newly developing urban centers, the waves of European migrants that arrived at the end of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth passed almost unnoticed in these two cities, which only became important immigration gateways after 1965. The contrasting institutional arrangements of the four cities can be seen in Table 5.1, 5.2, 5.3.

Table 5.1: Power Arrangements in Four Cities

City	**Power Arrangement**
New York	o Strong mayor system o Weak council
Los Angeles	o Weak mayor system o Mayor has little control over city budget and resources o Authority restricted to appointments of important city wide agencies
Chicago	o Weak mayor o Strong council o Mayor controls through political machine
Dallas	o Mayor – manager – council

Table 5.2: Electoral Systems in Four Cities

City	Elections	Party system
New York	District ward	Robust party structure / partisan elections
Los Angeles	At large primaries for mayor / district	Non-partisan runoff elections
Dallas	Non-partisan District / mayor at large	Non-partisan
Chicago	District / wards	Robust partisan

Table 5.3: Political Development in Four Cities

City	Political Development
New York	Old industrial city / party machines
Los Angeles	Reform city
Chicago	Old industrial city / party machines
Dallas	Reform city

Because the political institutions of New York and Chicago evolved in a context in which greater collaboration among ethnic groups was needed, these cities appear to offer a better environment than Los Angeles and Dallas for the incorporation of Mexican immigrants. Before we jump to quick conclusions, however, it is important to undertake a broader analysis and review the characteristics of the four cities' political systems as well as their historical interactions with their Mexican-origin populations. This review shows that in all four cities the political integration of Mexicans has been difficult and more arduous than that experienced by previous immigrant groups. This reflects not only less

welcoming political institutions, but also an unwelcoming economic environment (e.g. welfare state retrenchment and budgetary emphasis on suburbs where immigrants are less likely to settle (Keiser 2000). For instance, successful incorporation seems at times more likely in Los Angeles than in Chicago and in Dallas than in New York. This has to do not only with the greater numbers of the Mexican population in Los Angeles, but also with the tendency of the exclusiveness of California and Los Angeles to politicize the Mexican community more than in places like Chicago, where Mexicans have reached accommodation with the local political machine and thus accepted a more limited political agenda. In this regard, constraints may create incentives for mobilization and incorporation. Despite this fact, the different characteristics of the cities have influenced the qualities of immigrant associational life. In Chicago, for example, first-generation organizations seem to be more socially active than in Los Angeles, reflecting the extent to which immigrants have absorbed the socially activist environment of that city. Thus, variations on the political opportunity structures of each place have an effect on the political and social behavior of first-generation Mexicans. These variations are determining the different ways in which they will adapt to their host country.

Before proceeding to the review of the experience of Mexicans in the four cities, we need to consider the demographic composition and electoral realities faced in all of them. As can be seen in Tables 5.4 to 5.7 and in Appendix B all four cities are becoming more diverse, probably more so than ever before. In all of them there is a growing percentage of Latinos and a shrinking proportion of African-Americans. These numbers also indicate that the growth of the Latino population has been determined by the large influx of Mexican immigrants in the last few years, which in all the four cities are the

immigrant group with the fastest rate of growth or with on of the fastest. In this respect, Latinos represent an immediate challenge not only to the non-Hispanic white elite which still is the largest voting block in each city but also to the recently empowered African-Americans. In the particular case of New York, the fast growth of the Mexican population also constitutes a threat to the Puerto Rican community, which has struggled for years to gain representation within the city's political system. Furthermore, it also may imply a major challenge for the Dominican community, which is the largest immigrant group in that city. These demographic data show that racial and ethnic polarization is, and will be, a regular factor in the political dynamics of the four cities. Inter- and intra-ethnic and racial conflict among subordinated groups may delay the chances of incorporation, but the emergence of ethnic coalitions is also a possibility.

Table 5.4: Change in Major Groups in Chicago Metropolitan Area

	1990	2000	% Change
Total Population	7,261,176	8,091,720	11.4 %
Latino	836,905	1,405,116	67.9%
White non-Latino	4,757,986	4,638,582	-2.5%
Black non-Latino	1,406,443	1,536,841	9.3%
Asian non-Latino	242,432	375,514	54.9%
Other non-Latino	17,410	135,667	679.2%

Source: Paral, Ready et al. (2004)

Table 5.5: Change in Major Groups in New York

	1990	2000	% Change
Total Population	7,322,564	8,008,278	9.4%
Latino	1,783,511	2,160,554	21.1%
White non-Latino	3,163,125	2,801,267	-11.4%
Black non-Latino	1,847,049	1,962,154	6.2%
Asian non-Latino	489,851	783,058	59.9%
Other non-Latino	21,157	58,775	177.8%

Source: Census (1990) and Census (2000)

Table 5.6: Change in Major Groups in Los Angeles County

	1990	2000	% Change
Total Population	8,863,164	9,519,338	7.4%
Latino	3,351,242	4,242,213	26.6%
White non-Latino	3,618,850	4,637,062	28.1%
Black non-Latino	934,776	930,957	-0.4%
Asian non-Latino	907,810	1,137,500	25.3

Source: Census (2000) and Hayes-Bautista and Nicholges (2000)

Table 5.7: Change in Major Groups in Dallas

	1990	2000	% Change
Total Population	1,006,877	1,188,580	18%
Latino	210,240	422,587	101.0%
White non-Latino	566,780	604,209	8.5%
Black non-Latino	296,944	307,957	3.7%
Asian non-Latino	21,952	32,118	46.3%

Source: Census (1990) and Census (2000)

5.3 Chicago: The Price of Accommodating

Chicago is an old industrial city that predates the Progressive era and that has for years been dominated by an entrenched Democratic Party political machine (Ferman 1996). As shown above, the city's political system is characterized by a strong city council and weak mayor. Despite this fact, its mayors have managed to have a strong hold on its political life thanks to an effective system of patronage exercised by the machine. Particularly remarkable in this regard was the administration of Richard J. Daley, who dominated the city's politics from 1955 until 1976 when he died in office. His son, Richard Daley Jr., became mayor in 1989 after a short period in which the machine lost city hall and since then has rarely been challenged by the city council (Judd and Kantor 2006, p.57).

For the first half of the twentieth century, political conflict in Chicago centered on class issues, and the distribution of power among the different European ethnic groups

that settled there, and to a lesser extent between Protestants and Catholics. By the mid-1960s, however, race had become the major political cleavage. Political debates of the time centered on fair access to housing and education and greater participation in the city's power structure for African-Americans. The emergence of this cleavage took place in the context of affirmative action programs and the civil rights movements. It was, nonetheless, the culmination of a massive in-migration of blacks from the South that had been in process for decades and the high fertility rates of this group, a phenomenon that corresponded with the rapid out-migration of whites. This dramatic demographic change was reflected in census data. During the 1960s, the city's population was 3,550,404. By the 1990s, it had declined to 2,783,726. At the same time, the African American share of the population increased from 22.8% in 1960 to 39% in 1990 (Ferman 1996, p. 20).

The growing size and high geographic concentration of blacks in specific areas started to have a political impact. As Ferman reports, between 1960 and 1980 the percentage of the voting age population that was African-American almost doubled from 20.2 to 38.7%, while the percentage of the voting age population that was white dipped from 71.7 to 48.3% (Ferman 1996, p. 23). The number of black ward committeemen appointed by the machine increased accordingly, but this was not enough to appease the demands for greater representation and political participation emerging from the African-American community.

Although blacks had been important supporters of the Democratic Party machine since the 1920s, they were consistently marginalized, receiving few economic, social and political benefits. As Kemp and Lineberry have argued, the political machine tightly

controlled the black vote until the 1950s. Thereafter, this situation changed as blacks increased their independent political activism and acquired greater political experience.

By the 1980s, blacks were able to elect Harold Washington as the first African-American mayor in the city's history, thanks to a coalition that included liberal whites and Latinos. With his death in office in 1987, however, the coalition fell into disarray and since then the political machine has returned to control the city's political life, although not with the same effectiveness and discipline that it displayed during Richard J. Daley, Sr.'s times.

Mexicans played almost no role in the city's political dynamics. Their presence in Chicago, although relatively large at certain times, passed mostly unnoticed (Longoria 2000). This situation started to change by the 1990s when it became evident to local politicians that Mexicans were the fastest growing ethnic group in the city.

5.3.1 The Mexican Community

Chicago has one of the oldest and largest Mexican communities in the United States. The Mexican presence can be traced to the First World War era when Mexicans started to settle predominantly in three neighborhoods: South Chicago, where they worked in the steel mills, Back of the Yards, where they labored in the packing houses, and the Near West Side, where they worked for the railroad companies. The Mexican presence in the first two of these neighborhoods persisted over the years, but those that lived in the Near West Side were pressed to move a few blocks South in the 1960s due to urban renewal projects (Taylor 1932; Año Nuevo de Kerr 1976; Padilla 1985). As a result, they settled in Pilsen, which had originally been the first Mexican settlement in Chicago composed of former farm-worker families seeking new occupations in an urban market (Belenchia

1982, p. 118). Today, Pilsen along with Little Village (better know as “La Villita”), Back of the Yards and South Chicago have large and vibrant Mexican communities. Although Mexicans are much more segregated in Chicago than in other urban centers, many have settled in other parts of the city, in the suburbs, and in satellite cities including Cicero, Melrose Park, Stone Park, Waukegan, Elgin and Aurora (McCarron 2003; Paral, et al. 2004).

The early Mexican settlers in Chicago arrived with a certain amount of experience in the United States. Many had already worked on the railroad lines connecting Northern Mexico to the American Southwest. Others did farm work in the Midwest or worked for the packinghouses of Kansas City (Año Nuevo de Kerr 1976, p. 20).

After the restrictive immigration laws of 1921 and 1924 shut down European migration but left Western hemisphere migration unregulated, many Mexicans were hired by labor recruiting agencies to work in Chicago and other cities of the region. In Chicago, Mexicans lived among other immigrant groups already established in the city including Italians, Russians, Greeks and Poles in the Near West Side; Poles, Slovaks, and Germans in South Chicago; and Poles and Irishmen in Back of the Yards (Año Nuevo de Kerr 1976, p. 28). Even if limited, their interaction with other immigrants, and the fact that they worked mostly in the industrial sector rather than for growers and ranchers, gave Mexicans in Chicago a unique experience the effects of which persist today. As Fuchs points out, in the East and Midwest there was the possibility of joining strong labor unions and Mexicans did not confront the brutal conditions to which they were exposed in other places, especially in Texas (Fuchs 1990, p. 121). Under these more favorable conditions, some Mexicans managed to become part of the labor force of major

industries, although not on an equal basis with other immigrant workers, since they earned the lowest salaries of all ethnic groups settled in the city.

Although they had better opportunities in the Midwest than in the Southwest, the living conditions of most Mexicans in Chicago were difficult and complex. In the labor market, they were hired generally as strike breakers and very rarely for permanent and steady employment (Padilla 1985, p. 23). This not only put Mexicans at odds with unionized workers, it also aggravated and accelerated the hostility of European ethnic laborers against them.

All newcomers faced a harsh reality in Chicago. A major difference between Mexicans and other newcomers, however, was that the former lacked access to citizenship until the second generation and, in many cases, a legal immigration status. Since they were not considered voters or potential voters, Mexicans were not attractive to the political machines that assisted the incorporation of other immigrant groups into the city's political system. As has been widely documented, in Chicago as well as in New York, the system of patronage played an important role in fostering the assimilation and political incorporation of immigrants. The machine offered them material goods and services in exchange for their votes. In many cases, for instance, the machines helped immigrants to naturalize and to register to vote. Although the obvious goal of the machine was to obtain and control the votes of newcomers, they also facilitated their integration if only passively (Merton 1957; Sterne 2001). Eventually, some ethnic groups gained relative autonomy and managed not only to penetrate but also to dominate the machine's power structure, as was the case of the Irish in Chicago, who even today have substantial control over the city's political life.

Mexicans never benefited from a similar situation. For instance, their murky immigration status made them vulnerable to deportation. During the Great Depression, in collaboration with American immigration officials, welfare agencies from the state of Illinois and the city of Chicago rounded up and repatriated Mexican workers and their families, regardless of their citizenship status (Padilla 1985). The main goal was to remove them from the welfare rolls since the city was close to bankruptcy, even though few of them actually depended on the system. The repatriation process had a tremendous impact on the Mexican community in Chicago. As Padilla explains: "Welfare repatriations became one of the most traumatic experiences of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans in their contacts with American government authorities" (Padilla 1985, p. 27).

It would take at least three more decades before the size of the Mexican population in Chicago attained that of the 1930s. The few who remained in the city[94], many of them young and predominantly American-born, decided to adopt a Mexican-American identity to improve their prospects of being accepted into the mainstream (Año Nuevo de Kerr 1976, p. 116). This strategy, however, ultimately failed because they represented such small numbers and because they were poorly organized.

In contrast to African-Americans, Mexicans, and Hispanics in general, were not considered a politically salient minority by the city's Democratic political machine until probably the 1980s and more clearly in the 1990s when their exploding numbers could not be ignored. For this reason, few programs and concessions were geared towards this group. In addition, the patronage structure of the city did not grant Latinos (either

[94] According to data provided by Belenchia (1982), based on original information from Taylor (1932), in 1930 22,000 Mexicans from Illinois were repatriated (some of them having a legal status but not entitled to citizenship, and others being illegally in the United States) while, many others left voluntarily due to the hardships of the Depression (no numbers available). Only 7,000 Mexicans remained in the whole state of Illinois.

Mexican, Puerto Rican or Cubans) political appointments since there was no need to control or co-opt their political support[95].

During the Second World War, a new generation of Mexicans arrived in Chicago. As Padilla points out, the bulk of the newcomers "were those who immigrated as part of the *braceros* (workers) program" (Padilla 1985, p. 31). The second *bracero* agreement signed between Mexico and the United States in 1942 had the original goal of solving the agricultural labor shortage in the Southwest created by the war. A year later, however, it was modified to allow for the recruitment of industrial labor. As a result, Chicago became a major destination point for Mexican workers. During a period of two years, from May 1943 to September 1945, "more than 15, 000 Mexican *braceros* were brought to work in Chicago" (Padilla 1985, p. 32). Although workers were usually expected to return to their homeland after a six-month period, many stayed longer, and others came back illegally.

Between the 1950s and 1960s, in the context of the third *bracero* program, (1951-1964) illegal immigration from Mexico reached historic highs. As concern with undocumented immigration increased, the status of Mexicans in the city became tenuous. Repatriation operations took place at different times in the city, the most recognized being the 1954 Operation Wetback. Again, the Mexican community in the city was in disarray. The institutional message they received was not encouraging: their labor was

[95] Until the 1980s politics in Chicago were defined predominantly by the dynamics between whites (a category that included all the ethnic European minorities that arrived into the city until the first quarter of the twentieth century, although the Irish had the greatest control of the political life) and blacks and to a lesser extent by the dynamics between Catholics and Protestants. Describing the political life in the early 1980s Kemp and Lineberry (1982) write: "The recent history of Chicago politics is in large part a history of changing racial patterns. *In the 1950s blacks accommodated to Chicago politics; in the 1970s Chicago politics has had to accommodate to blacks."* This happen in great part because the African American population in the city had the largest growth rate. It is not yet clear to what extent Chicago politics has to accommodate to Mexicans and more generally to Latinos, which are now the population with the fastest growth rate. This is in great part because an important segment of this population is still ineligible to vote. Still, it is clear that they have become an important part on the equation for many politicians seeking elective office.

needed, but no roads would be opened for them to regularize their situation and acquire legal status.

In contrast to other immigrant groups, then, Mexicans faced an institutional structure in which formal participation in the city's political life was not possible because the majority could not become legal residents. For those who could acquire citizenship (mostly the offspring born in the United States), the continuous threat of deportation affected their predisposition to participate in politics for decades. One of the first effects was the elimination of the sense of confidence that Mexican-Americans had built around the goal of being accepted into the city's mainstream society. As Padilla points out: "Any hopes and thoughts of assimilation on the part of Mexican-Americans were cast in doubt after the actions of American officials during Operation Wetback" (Padilla 1985, p. 36).

In organizational terms, an important consequence of their long-term residence in Chicago being at risk was that Mexicans had few incentives to mobilize and establish political groups. With respect to voting, there are signs that citizens chose to avoid any open participation in the local political processes. This was reflected in low registration and voting turnout rates for Mexican-Americans as reported by Belenchia (1982, p. 129; Browning, et al. 1990b). It is probable consequently that when Harold Washington was elected mayor first in 1983 and in 1987 his coalition included African-Americans, liberal whites and Latinos, but few Mexican-Americans since as Starks and Preston reported the Latino vote for Washington was mostly Puerto Rican[96](Starks and Preston 1990).

This can be seen in the data for the 1987 mayoral primary election within the Democratic Party in which Washington defeated Jane Byrne, the Democratic Party

[96] The Latino population of Chicago includes predominantly, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans, although new national groups have also arrived into the city since the 1980s.

machine's candidate. Byrne got 30.6% of the Puerto Rican vote, whereas Washington got 62.2%. In contrast, Mexican voters gave Byrne 59.9%, while only 36.5%supported Washington (Starks and Preston 1990, p. 98).

Another institutional obstacle to the political participation of the Mexican-origin population in Chicago is the way political representation is structured. Chicago is divided into fifty wards from each of which an alderman is elected to the city council. While some ethnic or racial groups are concentrated in specific wards--thus increasing the potential that the aldermen they favor gets elected--"no single community area in which Latinos predominate falls wholly within one ward (Belenchia 1982)." Because of this, it has been difficult for Latinos in general and for Mexicans in particular to elect members to the city council and until the 1990s[97] Hispanic aldermen were rare.

Despite these limitations Mexicans have been able to participate in neighborhood organizations, which tend to be stronger in Chicago than in most American cities. Since Mexicans have been inclined to concentrate in specific areas within the city and share similar characteristics in terms of income and lifestyle it is easy for them to become part of groups linked to local centers of worship, schools or police. This became particularly viable after the implementation of IRCA when many Mexican immigrants acquired legal immigration status in the United States. Many of the leaders of HTAs and SFs first acquired their leadership skills by getting involved in community organizations at the local level.

Community participation has barely translated into political action, however. Although Chicago offers favorable conditions for neighborhood organizations with a

[97] In 1980, only two Latinos held elected office in Chicago, not including judges. Redistricting after the 1980s census, however, created the first Latino state legislative district, and facilitated the gradual election of more of them. By 2001, 22 Latinos held elected office (Hernández Gómez 2001).

social character, the political machine generally represses groups that take independent political stances. This, along with the fact that Mexicans either have tended to avoid politics or have passively supported the machine, explains why the mobilization and organization of Mexicans has not been very effective.

5.3.2 Mexican Participation Today

During the 1980s there was a period of activism and progressivism among various ethnic and racial groups in Chicago, in great part inspired by or related to the election of Harold Washington. A new political class of Latino leaders emerged, especially Puerto Rican but also Mexican-American. Many were part of a first generation of college graduates from local academic institutions, including Northeastern Illinois University, and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Within the Mexican-American community, there were at least two important leaders. Rudy Lozano was born in Arlington, Texas and resided for a long time in Pilsen and then in La Villita. Lozano was a student leader, social worker and community activist who defended the rights of undocumented workers and directed the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. His greatest political contribution, however, was helping to build the coalition that elected Washington. Among other things, he assisted Washington mobilize the vote of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. Lozano was murdered in 1983 for unknown reasons.

The second leader that emerged at the time was Jesús G. García, who became an alderman in 1986 and later on a state senator. García worked along with other Puerto Rican leaders, and was part of the Mayor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs. This agency became an incubator for future Latino leaders. With Washington's death,

however, the Commission lost its steam and was finally folded into the Commission on Human Relations in 1989, when Richard M. Daley, Jr. was elected mayor. Today, García is executive director of the Little Village Community Development Corporation and is an active member of Durango Unido, one of the organizations based on the state of origin that have emerged among the first-generation Mexican community in the last few decades.

By the 1990s progressivism within the Latino community had diminished, as leaders were more moderate or conservative, many of them having acquired their experience in the business or non-profit sectors rather than at university campuses or through community organizing. Although more Hispanics were elected to office, they were less effective advocates of community interests, as some of them aligned with the political machine and/or defended policies that in practice adversely affected their own community such as neighborhood gentrification. Collaboration between Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans that was at its peak during Washington's administration also became rare as each group focused on tending its own garden.

Today, the Mexican and Latino communities confront important barriers to political mobilization. Although the number of people of Mexican and Latino origin has dramatically increased in the last two decades (see table 5.4 and Appendix B), they still have limited social and leadership capital. These limitations become more evident when focusing on the particular case of the Mexican community (see Appendix B), which makes up 75% of the Latino community in the Chicago metropolitan area (Paral, et al. 2004). In this region, the number of foreign born Latinos increased by 92.6% during the 1990s and it is estimated that of the total Latino population only 65% have United States

citizenship (Paral, et al. 2004). This problem is not faced by Puerto Ricans, all of whom hold American citizenship. To this we have to add that the number of undocumented Mexicans is still large (although there is no reliable data available, the Mexican consulate adds 30% to the number of Mexicans living in the city identified by the census, assuming that undocumented are undercounted).

Although the Mexican community has grown rapidly and many Mexicans are now prosperous businessmen or professionals, the majority of the Mexican population is still poor. In Pilsen, for example, the largest Latino neighborhood in the city (88.9% of the population are Latinos) (Paral, et al. 2004) and where the majority of residents are Mexican born or of Mexican origin, 36% of the community's children lived below the federal poverty level according to data produced in 1998 (UIC 2006).

Social spending in the city has declined in the last decades and the non-Hispanic whites who still dominate the political life of Chicago have been generally unwilling to invest more resources in improving public education and health services. In addition, a decline in affordable housing in the city, a direct consequence of policies of demolition and gentrification, worsens the already difficult conditions in which Mexican newcomers live.

Despite these problems, there are positive factors that may facilitate the incorporation of Mexicans in Chicago more quickly than in other urban centers. These include the multiethnic character of the city, its long-standing tradition of receiving and accommodating newcomers, and the greater interest that local politicians have recently shown in reaching this community. Writing in the early 1980s, Kemp and Lineberry argued that the "the dominating concern of the Chicago machine has been to maintain its

white and largely ethnic power base, while accommodating the city's growing black middle-class" (Kemp and Lineberrry 1982, p. 7). In the first decade of the twentieth century it seems that the dominating concern of the local political class has become how to accommodate the city's growing Latino population while maintaining its political control (McCarron 2003).

Furthermore, the city's "native" whites have not shown anti-immigrant stances common in places such as Los Angeles. For instance, support for immigration reform that would legalize undocumented workers appears to be much higher in this city than in many others. A report issued in June 2004 by a regional task force assembled by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations was highly critical of current American immigration policies and its recommendations included creating an earned legalization program for the undocumented with a path towards citizenship and the development of a "national integration policy" (Edgar, et al. 2004).

The business and financial classes in Chicago may also become supporters of Mexican incorporation. Remittances to Mexico represented $13.4 billion in 2003, 16.6 billion in 2004, and 20 billion in 2005 (BDM 2006). The processing of at least part of this money is certainly an interest of local banks. For instance, "thirty three of the 48 American banks that offer international remittances services are in the Midwest" (Economist 2004, p. 28).

The support of Chicago's economic elites has been translated into greater opportunities for Mexicans to assimilate into the city's social and political life. For example, local financial institutions have been active in promoting the acceptance of the *Matricula Consular*, the identification card provided by the Mexican consulate, which

has direct benefits for undocumented immigrants, including the possibility of accessing basic services previously denied to them. In addition, since 2003 these institutions have been participating with the Mexican consulate, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) in a pilot program that provides immigrants access to mortgages, financial education courses and scholarships (Economist 2004, p. 28).

5.4 New York: Inter-ethnic Conflict as a Major Obstacle for Incorporation?

New York is one of the oldest industrial cities in the United States. As in Chicago, machine politics within the Democratic Party dominated the city's political dynamics for a great part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Probably the most famous and corrupt political machine in American history was controlled by William Marcy "Boss" Tweed from 1868 to 1871. The machine nevertheless played an important role in facilitating the social assimilation and political incorporation of immigrants who arrived in the period of its ascendancy.

> Because of their voting strength, naturalized citizens became a powerful force in the politics of New York City. Political parties deliberately cultivated the immigrants. During the movement for suffrage extension in the 1820's, Tammany leaders, originally opposed to foreigners, saw the potential power of the immigrant vote. After manhood suffrage went into effect in 1827, the Democrats developed a system of recruiting aliens, which contrasted sharply with the usually hostile attitude of the Whig party. . . . Immigrants were met at the boat; a 'naturalization bureau' was set up at the Wigman . . . and it was common knowledge that many of these adopted citizens voted before they had fulfilled the Federal residence requirement of five years (Ernst 1949).

Machines also created a sense of community and belonging for new impoverished immigrants (Judd and Kantor 2006, p. 58). They organized picnics, patriotic gatherings, baseball teams, choirs, youth Clubs, and other activities (Fuchs 1990). Machine leaders in New York City handed out goods and promoted the acceptance and recognition within the larger society of their cultural heritage. Despite these facts, there are doubts about the effectiveness of machines in helping immigrants achieve social mobility (Judd and Kantor 2006).

Though with less intensity than in Chicago, machine style politics remains entrenched in New York City's political culture. A strong mayor coupled with a vast municipal budget creates substantial opportunities for political patronage. However, it is not evident that these clientelistic structures will play their traditional role in the incorporation of the post-1965 immigrants. For instance, as in Chicago the machine can hinder the integration of newcomers since its main purpose today is to protect the interests of the city's predominant political groups. In addition, it may be an obstacle for the emergence of autonomous political organizations and of independent minority and/or liberal coalitions.

5.4.1 New York City's Political Development

For at least the first half of the twentieth century political conflict in New York City was centered on ethnic and religious cleavages, notably among Irish and Italian Catholics as well as Jews. For many decades these groups were able to establish a loose coalition that ran city politics without major challenges. Most political positions were allocated among Irish and Italians and to a lesser extent to Jews who sometimes aligned with black voters in support of more liberal candidates.

By the late 1960s, the city's white ethnic voters became more united, as they felt challenged by the blacks and Puerto Ricans, who were settling in the city in greater numbers at the same time that many white Catholics were migrating to the suburbs. Since then, Jewish voters, "especially those living in the outer boroughs, began voting with their Irish and Italian counterparts" (Kauffman 2004, p. 120).

For the following two decades, the interracial battles between non-Hispanic whites and other ethnic and racial minorities (that is Puerto Rican and Blacks) took place within the Democratic Party, a circumstance that created the idea that New York's voters were highly liberal as compared to the rest of the country (particularly, because in the general elections non-Hispanic whites voted along with other minorities for the Democratic party). As Kauffman (2004) has suggested, however, non-Hispanic whites have generally tended to support conservative policies and politicians in detriment to liberal agendas and candidates that benefit the interest of African Americans and Puerto Ricans.

This became clear in 1989 when David Dinkins, a black politician, defeated Ed Koch to become the Democratic Party nominee. As Kaufman explains, Dinkins' campaign produced many defections within the Democratic party, and although he won the mayoral election of 1989 with the support of African-American, Latino and liberal non-Hispanic whites, he "was never able to rally a sufficient base of white voter support to sustain his mayoralty" (Kauffman 2004, p. 121). In 1993 he was defeated by the Republican candidate Rudolph Guiliani, who was able to capture a sizable part of the non-Hispanic white electorate(Kauffman 2003), despite the fact that New York City was

and still remains a city where most of its voters, regardless of their ethnic or racial origins, identify themselves as predominantly Democratic.

It is within the Democratic Party, for instance, that most ethnic and political conflict has taken place. As Kauffman puts it, historically,

> waves of new ethnic and racial immigration to the city –such as the Jews, Italians, blacks, and Puerto Ricans—were incorporated into the party machinery as a way of derailing reform challenges and maintaining the strength of the single party structure. Participating in the regular Democratic party organizations guaranteed access to significant political rewards, and thus the material interests of each group were tied to the success of regular Democratic candidates (Kauffman 2004, p. 122).

Therefore, although minority penetration of the political system below the level of the mayoralty became viable, independent minority political activism and coalitions were almost impossible. This contrasts with the case of Los Angeles where Jews, Black and Latinos shared an outsider status within the local political system, allowing them to assemble a multiracial coalition in 1973 to successfully challenge the conservative regime that had dominated that city for most of the twentieth century.

Today, with a new immigration era in place, interethnic and racial conflict remains the most important cleavage in New York, with the major groups competing for the main political positions and with non-Hispanic whites still controlling City Hall. The constantly growing numbers of Latinos, however, have converted this group into a key electorate. Although many political scientists and activists expected this group to become a natural coalition partner with African-Americans, Latinos have tended to vote in

increasingly larger numbers for Republican candidates while African-American voters remain as one of the most loyal constituencies of the Democratic party (Kauffman 2004, p. 205). The mayoral race of 2005, where the Democratic candidate Fernando Ferrer received more than 60% of the Latino vote, was an exception (Trichter and Paige 2005). New immigration, nonetheless, is also changing the nature of this Latino electorate. For a long time this group was monolithically Puerto Rican. Now Dominicans, the city's largest immigrant group, and to a lesser extent Mexicans are claiming a share of the power originally enjoyed by Puerto Ricans (Porter 2001). This means that ethnic conflict within the Latino block may become a characteristic aspect of the city's political life, especially as new immigrants and their children become citizens. Nonetheless, at the neighborhood and community level this intra-ethnic conflict is already apparent. Conflict is more evident between Puerto Ricans and Mexicans than between Puerto Ricans and Dominicans, probably because the last two groups have more in common than the first two. Puerto Rican and Mexican contestation has become more acute as the latter have been settling in areas traditionally dominated by Puerto Ricans such as East Harlem.

5.4.2 Origins and Problems of the Mexican Community

In contrast to other areas of the United States, particularly the Southwest where immigration is disproportionately Mexican, the Latino community in New York is not homogenous. The largest immigrant group is from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Ricans also have a large and longstanding presence in the city (see Appendix B). This not only means that the identity formation of Mexicans in the city is different from that developed in other more homogenous localities or in places where they are the largest Hispanic group (Solís 2001), it also implies that the incorporation process of Mexicans

into city politics is and will be very much determined by the relationships and dynamics they establish with these groups.

5.4.3 The History of the Mexican Community

There are various accounts of the origins of Mexican immigration to New York City. A Mexican consular official who worked with the Mexican community from 1982 to 2001[98] argued that the first Mexican immigrants arrived in the 1920s when retailers from the Yucatán Peninsula made regular trips from Progreso and Havana to New York and eventually settled. The first Mexican immigrant he identified was Salvador Sánchez who established a Mutualist society to help in the repatriation of Mexicans for economic reasons. In 1928 these immigrants also created the *Centro Mexicano de Nueva York* (New York Mexican Center), which supported a folkloric dance group. With the Cuban Revolution in 1959, however, this immigration was for the most part suspended. In the late 1950s, however, a few Mexicans from Jalisco and Michoacán arrived in New Rochelle after Antonio Valencia, a native of Jalisco, was hired by the mayor and brought his family, establishing an initial immigration network that later expanded to Mount Vernon and White Plains in Westchester county.

Smith (1996a) and Creuheras (2003), for their part, have documented the arrival of Mexican immigrants from the Mixteca Baja region in the early 1940s and 1950s. This region, which includes "the southernmost part of the state of Puebla, the northernmost part of the state of Oaxaca, and the easternmost part of the state of Guerrero" (Smith 1996b, p. 60) has produced the most Mexican immigrants to the New York Metropolitan Area. According to the Mexican Consulate in New York (2000), more than 50% of the Mexican population comes from Puebla, while the rest comes predominantly from the

[98] Interview with Consular official in New York City. June 4th, 2001.

Federal District (12%), Oaxaca (7%), and Guerrero (6%). Although the first immigration networks were established in the 1940s and 1950s, it is safe to say that mass Mexican immigration to the city did not take place until the 1980s. This was the result of an economic crisis in the Mixteca region in the 1980s and the fact that new immigration laws in that decade (IRCA in 1986) facilitated not only the arrival of new immigrants from other parts of the United States and other regions from Mexico but also the expansion of the limited immigration networks first established in the 1940s (Smith 1996a).

Given this, it is possible to argue that, in contrast to Chicago and Los Angeles, Mexican immigration to the New York Metropolitan area is fairly new, producing only the fifth largest immigrant group in the city and accounting only for 4.2% of the total immigrant population (New York City Department of City Planning 2004)[99]. Despite this, Mexicans were the immigrant group with the second fastest rate of growth in the city between 1990 and 2000 (274.9%) behind only Bangladeshis (393%) and this number could be larger according to some city demographers (Bernstein 2005).

As a result of its recent arrival, Mexicans in New York may face more complex problems incorporating than in other American localities. The first problem is that they do not have the strong support networks that Mexicans established in more traditional immigration areas. Whereas in Los Angeles and Chicago large numbers of Mexicans were able to legalize their status after the 1980s, in New York only around 9,000 were able to do so (Smith 1996a, p. 61). As argued in Chapter 4, a legal immigration status is correlated with the emergence of new leaders and new organizations within the Mexican

[99] It should be said, however, that in 1990 Mexicans ranked as the 17th largest immigrant group to the city (New York City Department of City Planning 2004). This attests to the fast rate of growth of this community in the city as it is mentioned afterwards.

community. This means that it may take longer for the New York community to develop a strong leadership to advance their interests than in other localities, even if the opportunity structure is more favorable for them in New York than in other places. For instance a sizable number of the Mexican community is undocumented and much more so than in places such as Chicago or Los Angeles. As Jeffrey Passel, a demographer with the Pew Hispanic Center told the *The New York Times,* 80 to 85% of all Mexican immigration to the United States since 1990 has been undocumented. Because New York is getting a many new immigrants from Mexico it could be argued that "virtually all of it is undocumented" (Bernstein 2005, p. B3). This puts Mexicans in a weaker position there than other immigrant and minority communities.

Because Mexican immigration is fairly new Mexican-Americans and Mexican-American organizations in the city are almost invisible. Whereas in Chicago and Los Angeles newcomers can depend on the assistance of Mexican-Americans leaders, in New York they cannot receive similar support. Their most natural ally would be Puerto Ricans, but so far there are signs that they have tended to view Mexicans with suspicion (Porter 2001).

5.4.4 Residential Patterns and Economic Conditions

In contrast to places like Chicago, where the Mexican community is segregated, Mexicans in New York are scattered as far as Passaic and New Brunswick in New Jersey, New Rochelle in New York and some areas of Fairfield County in Connecticut. Within the city limits, some large numerical concentrations are emerging, including Sunset Park-Industry City in Brooklyn, Corona in Queens, and East Harlem in Manhattan. As *The Newest New Yorkers, 2000* report shows, Mexicans are the immigrant group with the

largest percentage of people living in overcrowded spaces (66.1%) (New York City Department of City Planning 2004, p. 30). This number is high compared to other Latino groups, which also live in very poor conditions (Dominicans 38 %, Ecuadorians 41.7 %, and Colombians 34.9 %). For instance, Mexicans are the immigrant group with the lowest rate of property ownership in the city (only 5.7% own the places where they live). With respect to their educational levels, the *The Newest New Yorkers, 2000* shows that only one third had completed high school(New York City Department of City Planning 2004). For instance, 29% of the adult population older than 25 had not finished 6th grade, 23% had not finished middle school and only 14% had gone to college (Velazquez de León 2001). Mexicans have the lowest educational levels of any community in the city. In addition, although the large number of workers in Mexican households gives them a median income higher than for other populations ($32,000), their mean earnings are the lowest for any immigrant group ($21,284 for males and $16,737 for women) (New York City Department of City Planning 2004) making them the poorest population group in the city. This becomes particularly problematic because Mexicans are having more children than any other immigrant group except Dominicans (Bernstein 2005).

Mexicans in New York have not been able to develop a professional and entrepreneurial class large enough to provide the community with leaders to advance their interests. This is true even though there are some successful businessmen who have profited, for example, from the increased demand for Mexican products.

5.4.5 The Incorporation of Mexicans Today

The human and social capital levels of the Mexican community in New York are meager. Despite this, the multiethnic character of the city may serve as a positive context,

at least because this diminishes their chances of becoming the target of anti-immigrant sentiment and laws as has happened in California. Furthermore, the fact that New York City has more points of entrance into the political system than other places (Mollenkopf 1999) implies that their incorporation process may be faster than expected. This, however, will depend very much on the kind of relationship the Mexican community establishes with Puerto-Ricans, who today dominate the highest positions of power within the Latino/Hispanic community, and other ethnic and racial groups (Smith 2002). It is not clear yet how the opportunity structure of the city, which has been deemed more favorable for the incorporation of newcomers than that of other American cities (Mollenkopf 1999; Mollenkopf, et al. 2001; Smith, et al. 2001; Smith 2002) will affect the integration of Mexicans. Whether Mexicans will successfully incorporate as past immigrant groups or become an underclass is an open question.

5.5 Los Angeles: Building a Coalition of Outsiders

In contrast to Chicago and New York, in Los Angeles political and social activism of minorities and newcomers has been generally seen with distrust. As a result, there is less encouragement for new immigrants to organize and less mobilization of newcomers by local institutions such as political parties, which have been historically weak anyway. Mollenkopf argues that while New York's political system promotes political participation of newcomers because it is centralized, politicized and organized, Los Angeles discourages it because it "is decentralized, depoliticized, and fragmented, if not disorganized" (Mollenkopf, et al. 2001, p. 63). Suspicion of political activism has a long history and is linked to the formation of its current political institutions, which were designed at the beginning of the twentieth century by a business-oriented elite governing

in the name of white, protestant, and religiously conservative mid-western immigrants. The latter arrived in the city in the last part of the nineteenth century and took almost complete control of its political life by the beginning of the twentieth, to the extent that "no African-American, Latino or Jewish person held elected office in the city between 1900 and 1949 when Edward Roybal was elected to the city council" (Sonenshein 2004, p. 30).

Los Angeles' conservative elite wanted to avoid the social and political unrest characteristic of the East and the Mid-West. They also were uninviting to European immigrants and other ethnic and racial groups, which they linked to the origins of this strife. They designed local institutions to isolate the administrative process from politics and to create a homogeneous community, free of the corruption of big-city machine politics. Los Angeles, therefore, is a reform city. Two prominent features of the reform movement were at-large and non-partisan elections. As Sonenshein has explained, at-large elections tend to diminish minority political power because they make it extremely difficult for minority candidates to win seats on city councils (Sonenshein 2004, p. 16). Nonpartisanship further reduces participation because it diminishes the capacities for political parties to build strong and loyal constituencies, and thus to bring new groups into the political process.

In addition to these features, Los Angeles' non-Hispanic white elite created a strong civil service system and established direct democracy through the recall, referendum and initiative, all mechanisms that were uncommon in the rest of the country at the time and which weakened local political parties. All of these elements, except the system of at-large elections that was rejected in 1925, survive today. Non-Hispanic

whites make up the majority of the electorate despite the fact that they lost their plurality in the city population in the 1990s. They have had few incentives to bargain with other groups. As Mollenkopf has argued, Los Angeles' political system creates little motivation for dominant white elites "to recognize, incorporate or co-opt claims from subordinate groups (including new immigrant groups) and for leaders of subordinate groups to accommodate one another" (Mollenkopf 1999, p. 413). In contrast, Mollenkopf explains, New York City "provides points of access for all groups, even new immigrants" (Mollenkopf 1999, p. 413) making it more likely that they can have substantial representation in the city's political system.

Despite this, the conservative white establishment has been successfully challenged on two occasions. The first took place in 1973 when in a historic contest the city elected its first black mayor, Tom Bradley, despite the fact that African-Americans constituted only 17% of the population and were far outnumbered by Latinos who accounted for 28% of the population. This triumph seemed improbable just a few years before, when Bradley, a liberal Democrat, lost the race against Sam Yorty, a conservative Republican. Four years later, Bradley was not only able to defeat Yorty but he kept control of City Hall for almost 20 years, being reelected four times. The second occasion took place in 2005 when Antonio Villaraigosa, a liberal Democrat, became the first Latino mayor of the city since the 1870s after defeating the incumbent conservative James K. Hahn, the son of a well-known politician in the city. As in the case of Bradley, his triumph had seemed unlikely just a few years before when he lost the mayor's race to Hahn. What wrought these changes about in a city whose non-partisan electoral system has widely discouraged the political mobilization and incorporation of minorities? What

does that mean about the process of political integration of the city's large Mexican immigrant population?

5.5.1 Bradley's election and the "Politics of Black and White."

From the 1960s to the 1990s the city of Los Angeles was divided between blacks and whites and liberals and conservatives. These political cleavages reappeared constantly during electoral periods and determined campaign issues. Even with a large presence in the city, Latinos played only bit parts.

For many years, the African American community was excluded from the political system and the policy process. In 1965, however, black Angelenos felt particularly aggravated by the administration of Sam Yorty who had seemed unresponsive after the Watts riots in the same year. (Sonenshein 1990, p. 37). The riots planted the seeds for black political mobilization and also provided a new agenda for blacks and white liberals. Tom Bradley's emergence as an important leader within the African-American community gave the new awakening traction. A former Los Angeles police lieutenant with a soft-spoken tone, Bradley was elected to represent the 10th Council District in 1963. From that position he built a strong black voting base, and established links with middle-class blacks, Jews, Asian Americans and even Latinos. When the riots took place, Bradley used his council forum to attack the Yorty administration for failing to seek federal grant funds. In his opposition against the Yorty administration he got the support of liberal whites who were out of power at the time of the riots.

In 1969, Bradley ran for mayor against Yorty with the support of a biracial coalition that included white liberals, many of them Jews, and African-Americans.

Capitalizing on fears of black militancy and anti-war student protests, Yorty was able to prevail. In 1973, in a less polarized climate, Bradley ran again and this time he was able to win election after liberal whites, particularly Jews, turned out in greater numbers than in previous elections. Latino turnout was also important. One interesting aspect that emerged from this process, however, was that the Latino vote was apparently divided along class lines. As Shonenshein explains, Bradley did better in low-income Latino neighborhoods, which was the opposite of the class relationship among Jews (Sonenshein 1990, p. 39). As will be seen later, this class cleavage within the Latino community would characterize its political behavior in the future.

The interracial support that Bradley was able to obtain became "an important confirmation of the minority incorporation thesis at the big city level" (Sonenshein and Susan 2002, p. 68). This thesis held that minority political incorporation in American cities was tightly related to their capacities of building alliances with white liberals and/or other minorities (Browning, et al. 1990c). Bradley's election, however, was striking for other reason: in a city in which minority incorporation was deemed to be difficult because of its conservative institutional structure, a black mayor was not only elected, but he was reelected four times. Sonenshein explains it this way: "In nonpartisan Los Angeles there are no party machines to stand in the way of a liberal coalition" (Sonenshein 1990, p. 33). This means that although minority political incorporation is more difficult in reform cities like Los Angeles than in the old industrial cities of the East and Midwest, once it becomes possible it takes place with greater force. Because incremental accommodation with the local power structure is almost impossible, the stakes become higher, creating more incentives for the integration of stronger dominant coalitions than in other places.

5.5.2 The in-Between Governments' of Riordan

During the 1980s and 1990s Los Angeles underwent major demographic changes. By 1980 non-Latino whites made up almost half the city population (48%), while African-Americans represented 17% of the population and Latinos 28%. Due to mass immigration from Latin America, the 1990 census showed that there was a 70% increase of Latino residents while non-Latino White and black populations declined by 8 and 2% respectively. Latinos, thus, became the largest ethnic group in the city, constituting 40% of the city's population (Kauffman 2004, p. 93). As Kaufman observes, this rapid demographic growth might normally have led to an increase in inter-racial conflict. However, because the local economy was growing, the racial fears of the non-Hispanic white elite were apparently mitigated. This situation was reflected in the high approval levels of the Bradley administration from all ethnic groups including non-liberal whites. The political environment changed, however, after the Californian economy fell into recession and as a result of new riots in 1992.

The history of these riots is well known. Sparked by the acquittal of LAPD officers in the beating of a black motorist, the riots resulted in 52 fatalities, 16,000 arrests, and a property damage close to $1 billion dollars (Kaufmann 2004). The public response to these events divided along racial lines (Kaufmann 2004, p. 95). The polarizing effect these events had on Angelenos' political views became clearer a year later during the election of 1993, when Republican businessman Richard Riordan was elected mayor.

During that election, not only racial conflict intensified as a result of the riots, but also anti-immigration sentiment became an issue. As Sonenshein and Susan point out,

Riordan, who conducted a law and order anti-immigrant campaign, "did not win the support of African Americans, but he won a significant minority of Latinos and broke even with Jews, who had been pillars of the Bradley coalition" (Sonenshein and Susan 2002, p. 68).

Although the Latino vote was not crucial to the outcome of the election, it is striking that they voted predominantly in favor of a mayor running on an anti-Latino (Mexican) immigrant agenda. A general answer is that the Latino community in Los Angeles, as in other parts of the United States, is divided to a great extent between those who have a higher status and have been subject to longer periods of cultural socialization in the United States (typically native-born Mexican-Americans but also those naturalized long ago) and those who have a lower status and are more identified with the working class (Desipio 1996; Kaufmann 2004). As Kaufmann explains:

> The negative publicity regarding illegal (and principally Latino) immigrants threatens the relative standing of middle-class Latinos in Los Angeles. The perceived lawlessness and poverty of illegal immigrants potentially damages the standing of all Latinos, and those middle-class Latinos with the most to lose are substantially more intolerant of illegal immigration than are their poorer counterparts (Kaufmann 2004, p. 114).

Evidently the class cleavage within the Latino community that was already manifest during Bradleys' 1973 election became magnified as a result of the large immigration flows arriving to the city. Would the Latino community overcome these cleavages or remain divided and depoliticized?

5.5.3 From Hahn's Election to Villaraigosa's Colorful Coalition

During the 1990s politics in California and Los Angeles were deeply affected by anti-immigrant sentiment. In 1994, Governor Pete Wilson ran a reelection campaign with a strong anti-illegal immigration message. He also supported an initiative on the ballot called Proposition 187 whose main goal was to ban illegal immigrants from public social services and education, and non-emergency healthcare. This initiative also called on state and local agencies to report any one suspected of being illegally in the United States.

As is well known, California's electorate approved Proposition 187, but its implementation was blocked by the federal courts. Two years after the passage of this proposition, a new "anti-affirmative action initiative (209) seeking to repeal most such programs in the areas of public contracting, jobs and education, passed the California electorate" (Barreto and Woods 2005, p. 148). Again, Governor Wilson and California's Republicans strongly backed it. In 1998, Latin-American immigrants were the targets of another conservative initiative (227), which proposed, unsuccessfully, to end bilingual education in public schools.

All of these initiatives, along with the 1996 changes in national welfare and immigration legislation, quickly galvanized Latinos in opposition and marked a turning point in their political behavior. Some changes in that behavior were noticed immediately and others, intriguingly enough, were not.

Among immigrant groups, especially Mexicans, these events spurred applications for citizenship which peaked in 1996 (David and Guerra 2002, p. 6). Voting registration and turnout among Latinos also increased although this was not clear in all instances. For example, during the 1994 general elections, when proposition 187 was on the ballot, it is

not evident that significantly more Latinos voted than in previous elections. As Barreto et al. have pointed out: “In part, this stems from the procedural reality of California’s then 29-day registration period” (Barreto and Woods 2005, p. 150).

In Los Angeles, Latino registration and turnout rates did increase after 1993 faster than Latino population growth would have predicted (Sonenshein and Susan 2002; Barreto and Woods 2005). In addition, identification with the Democratic Party within the Latino population became more prominent as Republican candidates were linked to an anti-immigrant/Latino stand (Barreto and Woods 2005). However, it was not evident that these events had stimulated “new broad-based, grassroots movements or propelled new leaders to prominence” (Mollenkopf, et al. 2001, p. 44), an outcome Mollenkopf attributed to the decentralized and depoliticized character of the city’s political system.

By the 2001 elections, however, the political environment in Los Angeles had changed even if the political participation of Latinos was still proportionally smaller than their share of the population (47% by 2000) due to its youth and non-citizen status[100]. From a pack of six candidates two became the favorites: Antonio Villaraigosa, who was a former state assembly speaker, and James Hahn who was the city attorney and the son of former County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn who was among the most admired politicians within the African American community.

With an effective campaign that resonated within white neighborhoods, especially in those predominantly Jewish, Villaraigosa emerged as the leading contender with 30% of the vote, while Hahn who had the support of conservative whites and African-

[100] According to 2004 data, Latinos represent 34% of California’s population but only 18% of the voters. In contrast, non-Hispanic whites make up only 45% of the population but 69 of the voters. This disproportion between the electorate of the state and the total resident population shows why there is still a long road for Latinos to become a major political force in the stat and in the city of Los Angeles(Katia 2004).

Americans was second with 25%. In the runoff campaign, however, Hahn successfully portrayed Villaraigosa as a "drug-ring kingpin" (Meyerson 2001) after linking him to a cocaine trafficker, Carlos Vignali, whose sentence was commuted by President Bill Clinton upon Villarraigosa's request.

The 2001 mayor's race illuminated the new divisions between white and black versus Latino and white liberals. Villarraigosa, for instance, compared his campaign to Bradley's in 1969 and scholars' pondered if Latino participation resembled the patterns of African-Americans in the 1960s and 1970s in which minorities allied themselves with ideological liberals (Sonenshein and Susan 2002). The Latino electorate voted as a block for Villarraigosa despite the fact that there were still clear divisions within the community as in the past, particularly on the subject of immigration (Sonenshein and Susan 2002). Finally, a major implication of this election was that African Americans and Latinos were both competitors and potential allies, and that this would depend less on race and ideology than on the characteristics of their leadership (Sonenshein and Susan 2002).

In 2005 Villaraigosa ran again against Hahn. This time, however, he was able to put together, for the first time in Los Angeles history, a colorful coalition that included Latinos, whites and African Americans. Asians were the only minority ethnic group that voted in large numbers for Hahn. According to *The New York Times*, Hahn made two decisions that shattered his winning coalition: 1) he angered blacks by replacing the police chief Bernard Parks with William Bratton, the former New York police commissioner; and 2) he alienated white voters who had supported him in the previous

election by fighting back an effort by the San Fernando Valley to secede from the City of Los Angeles (Broder 2005).

Villaraigosa's election was a watershed event in Los Angeles politics and a confirmation once again of the thesis that minority incorporation at the big city level required the establishment of coalitions that included moderate-liberal whites and one or more minority groups (Browning, et al. 1990c). What does his election mean for the incorporation process of the first generation Mexican community in Los Angeles?

5.5.4 The Mexican Community

Villarraigosa's triumph was the political culmination of a demographic phenomenon that had been taking place in Los Angeles for more than two decades. Although from the 1880s to the 1970s the city was predominantly non-Hispanic white, by the 1980s it was becoming clear that if immigration from Mexico and other Latin American countries continued at current levels, the city would become predominantly Latino. This situation became an uncontested reality in the 2000 census (for Los Angeles County, Latinos represented 44.6% of the population (see Table 5.6).

Because it was originally a Mexican city, Los Angeles has had, historically, a relatively large Mexican-origin population and been a leading center of Mexican-American life. Despite this, Mexican-Americans had a hard time gaining political representation in the city. When Bradley took power Latinos were an important component of his coalition, but his government did little for the political careers of Mexican-American leaders. In the first ten years of his administration no Latino leader was elected to local political office. Finally, in 1983 Richard Alatorre won a seat on the city council. It took a voting rights lawsuit to create a second Latino city council district

after 1990 (Mollenkopf, et al. 2001). Finally, in 1993 a third Mexican-American was elected to the council and since then Mexican-Americans have been gradually winning political positions at different levels of government.

The electoral triumphs of Mexican origin leaders certainly can be considered an important step in the political incorporation of the Mexican immigrant community. As Mollenkopf puts it, in Los Angeles "Mexican-American political elites are divided over their long-term strategy and often distance themselves from immigrants' concerns" (Mollenkopf, et al. 2001).

Antonio Villaraigosa has shown a strong inclination to support the Mexican immigrant community and it is probable that he will attempt to devise policies that benefit this community. However, he will be hampered by the fact that he depends on a broad-based coalition and that the mayor's office in Los Angeles has few real powers.

Attending the needs of this community, however, is key for the future of the city. As a recent report explained: "Census data show that nearly two thirds of children in Los Angeles County were in Latino families" (David and Guerra 2002, p. 5)[101] Many of them are born in immigrant households, since 78% of adult Latinos in California, the majority of whom are concentrated in the Los Angeles region, are immigrant Latinos (David and Guerra 2002, p. 7). The characteristics of this community and their possibilities of improving their living conditions will determine to a great extent the social and political future of Los Angeles.

As in the other cities considered in this study, the Mexican immigrant community in Los Angeles has a low level of human and social capital. The majority performs

[101] In some cases, the information I gathered refers to Los Angeles County, in others to the City of Los Angeles. I clarify in each instance to which unit it is referring.

menial labor in the city's service industry (16%), or work as operators in the industrial sector, or in the technical/clerical/sales industry (23%). Only 10% of this population performs managerial or professional work (Larios 2001). Although it is difficult to know the exact numbers, a large portion of this population is undocumented, particularly those who arrived after the 1990s. Despite this fact, Los Angeles has a proportionately larger population with legal status than cities such as New York, as many Mexicans were able to regularize their immigration situation as a result of IRCA and family reunification policies[102].

As in the case of New York, Mexicans are scattered all over the Los Angeles Metropolitan area. Although the most well known Mexican community in the city is East Los Angeles, Mexicans have also settled in South Central and the San Fernando and San Gabriel valleys. Thirty-five percent of Mexicans live in households with five or more adults (Larios 2001).

Mexicans in Los Angeles have very low educational levels, although better than those arriving in New York. Data provided by the Mexican consulate show that within the Latino population of Los Angeles County, Mexicans have the lowest probability of finishing high school (51.5%). At the same time, only 17% of immigrant adults had that level of education, 44% finished only middle school and 19% elementary. Although 15% have some college education, only 5% have obtained a bachelor's or higher degree.

Despite low educational levels, an entrepreneurial and professional class is emerging to provide the first generation community with new leadership. This was facilitated by the 1986-immigration amnesty. In addition, many California immigrants

[102] As Waldinger and Bozorgmehr point out: "The Los Angeles accounted for a third of all the undocumented immigrants estimated during the 1980 census and roughly the same proportion of the population who obtained amnesty under IRCA" (1996, p. 14).

come from the central region of Mexico, which tends to be more developed than the Mixteca Baja that provides more immigrants to New York. This leadership has differentiated itself from the American-born Mexican-origin elite and is more prone to have a bilateral agenda rather than one based only on the city of residence. At the same time, however, it has also been learning from the Mexican-American community, which provides the majority of the Latino leaders in the city[103].

In summary, the Mexican immigrant community of Los Angeles still faces many challenges for its incorporation in the city. Historically, the political opportunity structure of the city functioned to limit the incorporation of minorities. Because minorities usually remained as outsiders, interest in winning the mayoralty grew. The non-partisan environment of the city functioned as a constraint but also as an opportunity to build coalitions that could advance the interest of newcomers. This is what happened in 2005 when Villaraigosa was elected mayor. Villarraigosa's election is certainly an important step in the political incorporation of the Mexican origin community both foreign and America born. Further political integration of the first generation Mexican community and their offspring depends on their capacity to develop strong leadership that can establish a working relationship with the better established Mexican-American community and with other ethnic groups as well.

5.6 Dallas: Incorporation Business Style

As in the case of Los Angeles, the distrust towards political and social activism has also had a long history in Dallas. Since the beginning of the twentieth century this city was dominated by a business and financial class that controlled not only major credit and financial decisions, but also the electoral processes for local political offices. It also

[103] "The vast majority of Latino Leaders 80% are U.S born" (David and Guerra 2002).

dominated the mass media, the work of charitable organizations, and even the leadership designation in minority communities (Hanson 2003). Early in its history Dallas experienced political competition and conflict and even developed a labor movement. This situation changed by the beginning of the twentieth century when business leaders stopped competing for control of the city's government and unified to better advance their interests. One of their first steps was to replace the mayor-alderman form of government, which was prominent in the mid-West and the East, with the mayor-commission system in 1906. As Morgan (2004) explains, the main goal of installing a commission was to make government more efficient and less prone to corruption and political unrest. The idea was to decentralize the administration into different departments presided by commissioners (e.g. fire and police, water and sewage, streets and public property, and finance and revenue) while the mayor would play the role of supervisor. This system was part of a first wave of Progressive reform of municipal government after the turn of the century. With the installation of the commission system, ward elections were also replaced with citywide elections despite major opposition by local labor organizations. Along with the existence of a poll tax introduced in Texas in 1902, and the acceptance of whites only primaries through the Terrell Election Law (Morgan 2004), minorities and the working class were effectively disenfranchised. Candidates representing these groups were unable to win any elected office in Dallas until 1969 when George Allen became the first African-American councilman in the city's history[104]. The commission system not only failed to eliminate political patronage, but it made governing the city more difficult because the commissioners engaged in internecine

[104] C.A. Galloway became the first non-white councilman in 1967, but he was appointed to fill an unexpired term

struggles over power and resources. The city's political life became radicalized as the Ku Klux Klan took control of many of the city's offices and county government (Hanson 2003). Dallas harbored the largest klavern in the United States. Many of the city notables were members of the Klan, including the most prominent banker, R.L. Thornton.

Eventually, however, the presence of the Klan became a problem for the local business elite as it challenged the city's image as a progressive and cosmopolitan place. By 1931 local businessmen and financiers pushed for the replacement of the commission system and the creation of a council-manager form of government through a new organization created for that purpose called the Citizens Charter Association (CCA). The goal was to run the city as a corporation. The city council would be an equivalent of a board made up of men "of widely recognized business judgment and broad experience," while the city manager would be a professional who would free such notable citizens "from direct responsibility of day-to-day management of operating departments of the city government, but could still control it" (Hanson 2003). Ideologically the goal was to separate "policy from administration and government from politics" (Hanson 2003).

When the new form of government was approved, the business community decided to institutionalize the CCA. Until 1975, when it was dissolved, the CCA (and its institutional successor, the DCC) dominated the selection of mayors, city councilors, school supervisors and other authorities in the city. The councilors, and many of the other authorities, were generally civic and business leaders with non-partisan ties selected by the CCA and promoted by the *Dallas Morning News*. In addition, with the goal of preventing them from building any independent political base, they were constrained to serve no more than three terms.

In 1937 the CCA was transformed into the political arm of the Dallas Citizens Council (DCC), which was created with the purpose of controlling the city's civic agenda and policy process. The DCC was a very tight group that included only CEOs or presidents of the top firms in the city. This non-profit organization was by invitation only and had two hundred members. None of them, however, were representatives of the society at large; lawyers, ministers, labor leaders, physicians and public officials were not welcomed. Since the business members of the DCC depended upon the growth and prosperity of Dallas, they would take steps to ensure that city services were efficient. Furthermore, "the city's economic elite would take actions that benefited minorities if convinced Dallas as an orderly, progressive city, hospitable to business, was at risk" (Hanson 2003).

In this non-political, business-like environment, right wing extremism flourished, particularly in the persons of Rev. W. A. Criswell, pastor of the First Baptist Church, and Republican Congressman Bruce Alger. Criswell denounced racial integration. Alger was a foe of Federal programs, the United Nations and the Kennedy administration. For many years the DCC was not interested in their activities as long as they did not interfere with the good image of the city. After the assassination of President Kennedy on November 22, 1963 during a visit to Dallas, the business community concentrated on eliminating the city's radical image. They blocked Alger's reelection to Congress and ensured the election of Erik Jonsson, CEO of Texas Instruments, as the Mayor. Jonsson brought major change to the city's economic and social landscape. Using both public and corporate resources he promoted the construction of the Dallas Forth-Worth airport as

well as the creation of the University of Texas at Dallas in a space that formerly belonged to Texas Instruments (Hanson 2003).

Jonsson's tenure, however, represented the last time the DCC held a complete monopoly of power in the city. By the 1970s, the city's environment had changed. The business class had become more pluralistic. In addition, in 1975 the courts mandated the election of eight of the eleven city councilors via the single-member district rather than the at-large formula. Unable any longer to control the selection of candidates, the DCC disbanded in the same year. Although the business community would continue to have significant influence in civic affairs and the selection of mayors, it would never again be able to exercise the political control that it did for much of the twentieth century (Hanson 2003).

Nevertheless, the long domination of city politics by the DCC left its imprint on the city. In Dallas, minimal government became the motto. The local authorities would provide only those services that could not be provided more efficiently by the market and charitable organizations. The city never developed strong political parties that could complement or counterbalance the interests of the business class. Neighborhood organizations were uncommon and support for disadvantaged communities was minimal. Under these conditions, the incorporation of minorities and new immigrants came at a snail's pace and usually without the willing collaboration of the non-Hispanic white population. Furthermore, since interactions between different ethnic groups were minimal, ethnic tension rather than negotiation became the norm.

5.6.1 The Politics of Exclusion: Blacks and Hispanics

In a political context in which the Ku Klux Klan and right-wing radicalism flourished it is not surprising that the norm was segregation of blacks and Latinos. For much of its history, the black community in Dallas was confined to wholly segregated neighborhoods that were poor and isolated. In contrast to cities with large African-American populations such as Washington, Baltimore or Atlanta, the black community in Dallas had a hard time developing a vibrant and educated middle-class that could "provide community leadership and function as peers of the white elite" (Hanson 2003). In the few instances when the black community provided credible candidates for the city council or school board, they were effectively intimidated and discouraged from running. Participation in labor unions, common in other parts of the country, was also unavailable, as attempts to organize industrial labor unions during the 1930s were brutally repressed. In summary, there were almost no mainstream avenues for African-American political participation.

Hispanics were also largely excluded, although with less intensity. Their presence in the city, however, was less visible. Although Texas historically attracted large numbers of Mexican migrants, Dallas was never a major center of Mexican-American life. Early in the twentieth century there was an area called "little Mexico" populated by refugees from the Mexican revolution, but it never contained more than 10,000 people. After World War Two the Hispanic population in the city increased and by 1970, when the census asked Hispanics to identify themselves, there were 68,000 (Hanson 2003). By the 1990s the city had a tri-racial population with blacks representing 29.5% of the population, Latino or Hispanic 20.9%, and non-Hispanic whites or Anglos 55.3%. By

2000, however, the numbers had changed with Hispanics becoming the largest ethnic group at 35.6%, while Anglos were 34.6% and African-Americans 25.6% (Morgan 2004). Despite their increasing numbers, Hispanics were, like blacks, excluded from grand juries until the 1960s, and they did not have access to the organized bar "until the 1960s, when the first three Mexican-American lawyers were admitted to practice" (Hanson 2003).

5.6.2 Incorporation Through Litigation

The inclusion of African-Americans and Hispanics into the city's political, civic and social institutions would be achieved only through the persistent intervention of the federal courts. Key events in this regard were the 1954 (*Brown v Board of Education*) and 1955 Supreme Court school desegregation decisions, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. The Supreme Court's decisions of the 1950s set the stage for the desegregation of the Dallas School Board. Constant opposition and obstacles imposed by local judges, however, delayed this process until in 1964 the Civil Rights Act forced local authorities to take more serious steps toward desegregation. Opposition from the non-Hispanic white elite still persisted, however, and from the 1970s until the beginning of the twenty-first century the Dallas School Board was under the court's supervision first for the protection of African-American students and then of Latinos, which by the 1990s were the largest group in the school system. The effects of these policies in improving the quality of education have been mixed, nonetheless, because the response of non-Hispanic white families was to move to the suburbs and send their children to predominantly white schools.

The Civil Rights Act also forced the integration of minorities in professional associations and public institutions. This, however, also occurred at a slow pace and under intense opposition from the conservative elite. For example, by 1990, the city police department, which was forced in the 1970s to hire more minority officers, was still "disproportionately Anglo", even when "all minority groups combined exceeded 50% of the city's population" (Hanson 2003).

Of far more effect was the 1965 Voting Rights Act. It "gave federal judges the power to strike down voting systems when they found that they systematically reduced minority representation" (Judd and Kantor 2006). Dallas was forced to modify its at-large system by adopting wards that would maximize representation for blacks and later on, with a 1975 Act extension of the Act, Latinos. The defense of the at-large system entangled the city in voting rights litigation from 1967 to 1991 (Morgan 2004). There were two conflicting interests--those of blacks who had a concentrated residential pattern and Hispanics, who were more dispersed. As a result, the legal battle for minority representation was driven by discussions as to the best combinations to represent these groups. Redistricting battles were also an issue after the 1980, 1990 and 2000 censuses.

Overall, changes in electoral law facilitated the election of more minority candidates to the city council and the mayor's offices. In 1995, Dallas voters elected the city's first black mayor (Morgan 2004). In 2000, the city manager and the school superintendent were Hispanic (Hanson 2003). Despite these advances, major questions remained as to the extent to which minorities had been incorporated into the city's politics. In his detailed book about the effects of the Voting Rights Act, Morgan (Morgan 2004) points out that the creation of electoral districts does not seem to have stimulated

electoral competitiveness and voter turnout. Furthermore, "even though the representatives elected from single member districts altered the dynamics of the struggles for power between the mayor, council and city manager, the informal relationships between public and private interests were not altered in any fundamental way by single member districts" (Morgan 2004).

5.6.3 Dallas as a New Gateway City and the Mexican Immigrant Community

Because Dallas was a relative newcomer to the urban scene, the city missed most of the early waves of European immigration to the United States. No specific immigrant group had ever attempted to press its interests onto the local political system (Morgan 2004). Nor did it develop an institutional infrastructure and political culture to accommodate the demands of a variety of white ethnic groups as other cities in the East and Midwest had. After the implementation of the 1965 Hartz-Cellar Act, however, the city became an immigration gateway attracting people from Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. This was facilitated by an economic boom during the 1970s and the first part of the 1980s, stimulated by the creation of the Dallas-Forth Worth airport, the presence of strong financial sector and a pattern of corporate relocation promoted by the city. Although the city suffered a financial setback in the mid 1980s, it was already an important center for major corporations. As the city expanded, so did job opportunities for new immigrants.

From 1990 to 2000 the number of immigrants residing in the city more than doubled. By 2000 the city had become highly diverse. According to census data, in the county of Dallas 64.4% of all immigrants were from Mexico (Sanchez and Weiss-Armush 2003). The Mexican population, however, was scattered all across the region. In

the North Texas region (which includes the counties of Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant where Forth Worth is situated), the immigrant population was 752,667 and 59% of those were of Mexican origin, followed by Vietnamese (5%), Indians (4%), Salvadorans (3%) and Chinese (2%) (Sanchez and Weiss-Armush 2003). The growth of the Latino population in the region has been so substantial that Dallas County alone ranks fifth in the nation in numbers of Hispanic residents. Overall, the Latino population in the Dallas-Forth Worth region, known also as the Metroplex, grew from 519,000 to 1.1 million. Therefore, Latinos now make up 35% of the population of the City of Dallas, 30% of Dallas County and 22% of the Metroplex (Sanchez and Weiss-Armush 2003). According to estimates from the Mexican consulate in 1994 the Mexican state that provides the largest number of immigrants to the region is Guanajuato (19%), followed by San Luis Potosí (12.9%), Zacatecas (8%), Durango (6%), Michoacán (5.6%), Distrito Federal (5.2%), and Nuevo León (4%).

Some members of the Mexican community, particularly those from Zacatecas, arrived in Dallas from California. As the president of the Federación de Zacatecanos del Norte de Texas (Zacatecan Federation from North Texas) explained[105], Texas was always a tough place to migrate to because the immigration authorities were stricter there than those in California. With legal status made possible after the 1986 amnesty, however, it became easier to move to Dallas, where not only real estate was cheaper than in California but jobs were more plentiful.

The Mexican population in the area works predominantly in the construction industry, but they are also gardeners, landscapers, and restaurant employees (Sanchez and Weiss-Armush 2003). As in the other cities, Mexicans are the poorest immigrant group

[105] Interview with the President of the Zacatecan Federation on February 2, 2003.

in the area, many of them living in crowded households (34.9% of Latinos in the metropolitan area live in crowded households). It is estimated that 80% of all the Mexican immigrants who arrived during the 1990s are undocumented (Sanchez and Weiss-Armush 2003).

The region has an important Mexican entrepreneurial class. This is because some of the owners of Mexico's most important industries (specifically those from Nuevo León) have homes there. Their contacts with the local Mexican community, however, are minimal. Besides this group, there is also a small entrepreneurial and professional class highly dependent on the ethnic enclave that has become relatively active within the community. As will be seen in the next chapter, they are not generally interested in politics and they have little interaction with local authorities.

> Although Dallas has had a Mexican-American community for many years, the only Mexican-American organization with offices there is LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens). This organization has done little for the community and in one recent instance in which members of the community had a confrontation with the police, Héctor Flores, LULAC's president who resides in the city, took sides with the police rather than with the community[106].

In a city where minimal government is a religion new immigrants learn to expect little. Low-income Mexican immigrants receive limited assistance from the local, regional and state governments, or from the social service organizations in the area (Sanchez and Weiss-Armush 2003). For instance, a study conducted by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute in the Oakcliff area of the city, which is predominantly Mexican, concluded that in general poor households there did not request welfare benefits even

[106] Interview with Executive director of Lulac in Texas, September 1, 2004.

when they qualified for them (for example, because they had US-born children, or US citizens living with them). The main reason was that they believed that seeking benefits would threaten their ability to remain in the country if they were undocumented "or interfere with efforts to obtain legal status" (Freeman, et al. 2000). As a result, they tended to live completely off the incomes they earned in the private sector, "which leave all of them well below the poverty line" (Freeman, et al. 2000). This contrasted with the case of San Diego, where immigrants were also interviewed and were two to three times as likely to receive some form of benefits..

5.6.4 The Incorporation of the Mexican Community

What are the prospects for Mexican incorporation in a city with minimal government, a pro-business environment and a political system that inhibits political mobilization? Surprisingly, incorporation of Mexicans may be faster in Dallas than in places such as New York where the Mexican populations are also predominantly new and there are no a strong Mexican-American communities.

One reason is that competition for resources in Dallas is more limited than in New York, where there are numerous immigrant and ethnic groups. Since Mexicans are the largest immigrant group in Dallas, and Latinos have become the major ethnic group in the city, they have greater prospects of being taken into account in major political decisions. Political coalitions are not easy to build in a city like Dallas and non-Hispanic whites have not been eager to accommodate any minority group. Despite this, when Anglos have to negotiate, such as in the school district, they have been more willing to do so with Hispanics than with African-Americans (Hanson 2003). Furthermore, although the Dallas political system is conservative, there has been a lot of pressure from the

federal judiciary for it to open up. This pressure has to a certain extent counterbalanced the apolitical environment of the city. In a way, more opportunity has opened up for Mexicans to integrate in the local political process than their level of mobilization would have predicted. A final factor is that in a city with a strong business environment, there may be more chances to develop an entrepreneurial class.

5.7 Conclusions

Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Dallas display important contrasts and similarities in their political developments and institutional designs that create a variety of constraints and opportunities for the mobilization and incorporation of Mexican immigrants. With political systems that developed prior to the progressive era, Chicago and New York offer more positive opportunity structures for Mexican immigrants than Dallas and Los Angeles. In Chicago, the pattern of incorporation has been accommodation. As they have become a more relevant population group, the local political machine has been more willing to open up spaces for the representation of people of Mexican origin. The machine has spurred incorporation but also has been a major obstacle. It has created negative incentives for independent organization and political mobilization and, thus, for minority groups to build or become part of a dominant coalition that can better advance their interests.

In New York, Mexicans interact with political institutions more open to immigrants and minority groups than in other cities. However, Mexicans are the poorest and most disadvantaged group and face fierce competition from other ethnic minorities that seem to have been more suspicious than willing to join hands. In this light, their incorporation may take longer than expected. Furthermore, the Mexican population in

New York possesses less human and social capital than those in other cities. Since the community is new, they have not yet been able to develop a strong support network.

Although the Los Angeles political system has been closed to minorities, it nonetheless has the highest levels of Mexican participation of the four cities. While in New York and Chicago party organizations and strong governments have created numerous disincentives to coalition building, in more exclusionary Los Angeles there are few institutional obstacles to minority-group organization once they develop the necessary resources (Sonenshein 2004). Many Mexican immigrants had naturalized in the last two decades. Mexican mobilization was, to a great extent, a reaction anti-immigrant policies and attitudes both in the state of California and the city. The result was the election of Antonio Villarraigosa mayor in 2005. Los Angeles shows that inhospitable environments may create incentives for minority organization and mobilization, perversely motivating their political incorporation.

Not all exclusionary environments are equal, however. Although Los Angeles is a reform city like Dallas, it also has many features of pre-Progressive Era cities that have facilitated minority mobilization. For example, in 1925 LA abandoned its at-large election system. Furthermore, it has a more diverse population than Dallas, fostering the building of heterogeneous political coalitions. While in Los Angeles the non-Hispanic white community is divided between more liberal and more conservative groups, in Dallas the Anglo community has been rigidly conservative. In this regard, African-Americans and Latinos have not been able to rely on the support of part of the non-Hispanic white population. On the contrary the system of exclusion has been so strong that the main element of support has been the federal judicial system. The incorporation

of Mexicans in Dallas, however, may turn out to be faster than in places like New York, because of the simple fact that Dallas immigrants face less political competition for resources. In New York, Mexicans will have to compete not only against non-Latino immigrant and ethnic groups, but also against Puerto Ricans and Dominicans.

CHAPTER 6

MEXICAN ORGANIZATIONS IN DALLAS, CHICAGO, NEW YORK AND LOS ANGELES: EXPLAINING VARIATION

6.1 Introduction

The last chapter showed that Mexican immigrants have faced major obstacles to political incorporation in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Dallas many of which go beyond the obvious limitations created by their immigration status. For this reason it is not accidental that they have predominantly focused on Mexican politics. As Koopmans (2004) suggested, in places where there are few channels of access to the decision-making process, immigrants have tended to focus their political goals towards their country of origin. In addition the Mexican government has been active in mobilizing and organizing immigrants in various American cities since the 1990s. Nonetheless, these organizations have also begun to assert themselves in the American context, with those in each city displaying distinctive patterns of behavior.

6.2 Chicago: A Laboratory for the Mexican Government?

Chicago is surpassed only by Los Angeles as the American city with the largest number of first-generation Mexican organizations. Considering, however, that the size of the Mexican population in Chicago is smaller (approximately 1 million) than the Mexican community in Los Angeles (approximately 3 million), it may be that the former has the most vibrant and organized Mexican immigrant community in the United States.

As suggested elsewhere (Desipio, et al. 2003), most newcomers from Mexico–and generally from Latin America--do not join or identify with the various immigrant organizations that purportedly attempt to represent them. Mexicans in Chicago are no exception to this rule. Despite this, interest in establishing and joining immigrant organizations is on the rise and reflects the gradual empowerment of a community that has settled in the United States in the last three decades and that has already established strong migration networks. Mexicans in Chicago are probably more organized today than ever before. Their organizations have tended to concentrate on the home country. As in many other places, the most common form of organization is HTAs. For every significant place of origin there is usually at least one HTA. Their steady increase is reflected in data provided by the Mexican consulate: in 1998, there were 90 HTAs. By July 2004 this number had grown to 255. To these we need to add an unknown number of organizations based on place of origin that have not been identified by the consulate. The growth of HTAs known to the consulate in Chicago can be seen in Figure 6.1.

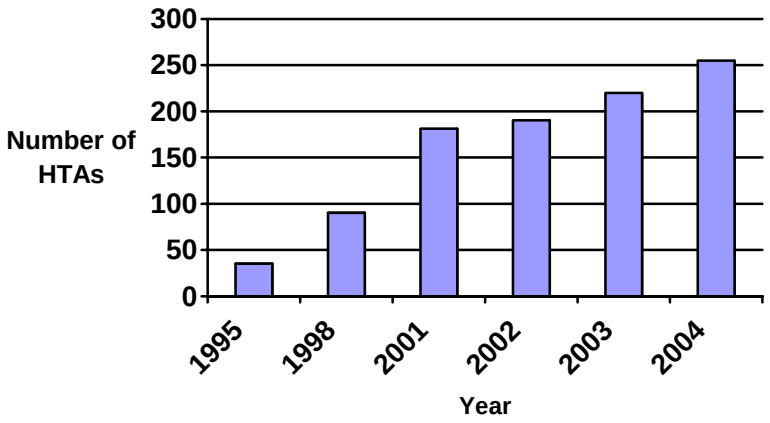


Figure 6.1: Growth of HTAs in Chicago[107]

[107] Data provided in 2004 by the Mexican Consulate in Chicago

SFs, which in many cases are made up of HTAs in particular states, have also grown not only in quantity but also in size. In October 2001, when I originally visited Chicago, there were eight SFs. By July 2004 there were fourteen, and the number of people and organizations they represented had also augmented so dramatically that one of the main problems these organizations face today is that their leadership, still with limited political experience, has not been able to deal effectively with the challenge of accommodating the demands and political views of their growing membership. Tensions within the federations are common and some of them have not been able to manage them effectively. For instance, three organizations created in 2004 emerged from the divisions that occurred as a result of quarrels within the federations of Durango, Guanajuato, and Guerrero. Table 6.1 shows the Federations in Chicago.

Political and service provider organizations are less prominent in number and have fewer members than the organizations based on the state of origin. They are also much less coherent since they do not have a formal structure and usually their existence depends upon the activism of a handful of people. As explained in chapter four, political organizations established by Mexicans during the last decade have an interest in acting as national fronts and generally they cannot be identified with only one city. However, many of the organizational efforts and the political activities that Mexicans in the United States have directed towards their homeland in the last few years started in Chicago or were planned and conducted from there. A Mexican political entrepreneur and analyst explains: behind every issue related to the agenda of Mexicans abroad there is at least one activist pursuing it from Chicago[108]. Although the pro-democratic political mobilization

[108] Interview with migrant leader in Chicago, October, 2001.

Table 6.1: State federations in the Chicago Metropolitan Area[109]

State Federation
Federación de Zacatecanos en Illinois
Federación de Guerrenses en Chicago
Federación de Jalisciences del Medio Oeste
Casa Guanajuato
Federación de Michoacanos en el medio Oeste
Asociación de Clubes y Organizaciones Potosinas de Illinois
Durango Unido en Chicago
Federación Oaxaqueña del Medio Oeste
Federación de Duranguenses en el Medio Oeste
Federación de Chihuahua
Federación de Hidalguenses Unidos
Federación de Oaxaqueños

of Mexicans abroad towards their homeland started possibly in Los Angeles and, more generally in California (Dresser 1993; Martinez Saldaña 2002), most of the recent political energy of Mexican expatriates, particularly that related to the right to vote from abroad, has been flowing out of Chicago. This was confirmed by a member of the Consultative Council of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad, a long-time political activist from Los Angeles, who argued that

> In Chicago, the Mexican leadership is stronger than in Los Angeles. This has to do with the fact that most Mexican emigration to the latter city has come from

[109] Data provided in 2004 by the Mexican Consulate in Chicago

> rural areas, and thus, the leadership has been really poor… Even when the issue of the right to vote from abroad was first posed in Los Angeles, it is in Chicago where it was really landed into a specific and concrete agenda.[110]

In Chicago there are various organizations claiming at different points to be the representatives of the Mexican community abroad including CDPME. It is also in Chicago where the more recent demands for creating a sixth political circumscription to represent Mexicans abroad in Mexico's national elections emerged. The main goal of this proposition is to guarantee a representation quota for expatriates in Mexico's Chamber of Deputies and Senate. In addition, all Mexican political parties have representatives in the city and some entrepreneurs have already been on the political parties' lists for Congress. That was true of Raúl Ross, who in 2000 ran unsuccessfully as a candidate for the Mexican congress with the PRD. For the Mexican government the expatriate community in Chicago is so vibrant that it has become a reference point and a laboratory to experiment with different policies towards émigrés. Many programs adopted by Mexican authorities are initiated in Chicago, including pilot plans to facilitate the sending of remittances to Mexico and projects to improve the education levels of emigrants (Gómez 2001).

The participatory environment that exists among some sectors of the Mexican community in Chicago also facilitated the implementation of the most democratic process in the selection of those who would represent the city in the Consultative Council of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad in 2002. In contrast to other cities where the representatives were hand picked by area leaders with the help of the local consulate, or where bitter confrontations emerged between competing factions, Chicago had the cleanest and most

[110] Interview with member from IME in Los Angeles, October 12, 2001.

democratic process. The election was organized by members of the community without the direct involvement of the local consulate and there was ample participation.

Why are Mexicans more organized and more politically active towards Mexico in Chicago than in most of the other cities considered in this study? To be sure, the political activism that prevails in Chicago within the first-generation Mexican community is related to the fact that this city has captured a group of relatively educated immigrants with previous political experience in their country of origin. Some people I identified, for example, were active participants in the *Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico* or STUNAM (Workers Union of the National Autonomous University of Mexico) while they were in Mexico, a traditionally independent union with links to the Mexican left. Others had participated in the student movements that took place at different points in Mexico's recent history (1968, 1971 and 1987). This factor alone, however, cannot explain the political activism identified in Chicago, because it is also possible to find people with a similar background in California. Another factor is the larger concentration and segregation of Mexicans in particular areas of this city than in any other urban region considered for this study, even if they are now distributed all around Chicago's Metropolitan region. Although other cities have neighborhoods with large pockets of Mexicans concentrated in specific places, it is difficult to find an equivalent to Chicago's Pilsen and La Villita where, except for the weather and the brownstone buildings characteristic of the Midwest, it is possible to feel as if one never left Mexico. The proximity in which people live and/or work facilitates constant interaction and exchange of ideas between political entrepreneurs and other leaders within the Mexican community. For example, leaders of HTAs and SFs that may

not have originally paid much attention to homeland politics may develop interests after meeting others who do, a process I witnessed during my research.

Another factor that facilitates a mobilized immigrant community in Chicago is the character of the city. An official at the Mexican consulate in Chicago who has managed the relationships of the Mexican government with the expatriate community for more than ten years argued that Chicago offers favorable conditions for the mobilization of immigrants towards specific goals. These conditions include its multiethnic environment, the independent social activism that prevails in the city, and its relative progressivism, which was particularly evident during the 1980s when local voters elected Harold Washington mayor (1983-1987). In addition, in Chicago as in New York the non-Hispanic white elite can relate to an immigrant past, limiting anti-immigrant sentiment. Furthermore, in Chicago immigrants can vote in school council elections, have regular and favorable interactions with local institutions such as the police, and are active participants in grass roots organizations that revolve around 120 Catholic congregations that conduct services in Spanish as well as in dozens of service provider organizations.

In summary, the existence of a relatively educated population with previous political experience in Mexico, the high levels of concentration and segregation of the community in ethnic enclaves and the unique characteristics of the city are factors that have helped mobilize the Chicago Mexican community in the last couple of decades. However, why has most of the organization and mobilization been oriented towards the homeland? Why have Mexicans in Chicago been less interested or effective in articulating claims vis-à-vis the city's political process?

One explanation has been the general political exclusion that the Mexican origin population faced in this city for so many years. Although Mexicans and Mexican-Americans more generally have lived in Chicago for many decades, they did not have strong incentives to participate in the city's political life. This situation contrasted with that of other immigrant groups that settled in the city at similar moments, and that were encouraged to become politically active by the city's political institutions, if only to guarantee the election of the machine's candidates.

Historically, Mexicans in Chicago did not perceive themselves as potential members of the polis, and were not perceived in that way by the local opportunity structures either. Only in the 1980s with the election of Harold Washington, did the Mexican origin community start to become more politically active. After Washington died, however, this activism diminished and the leaders that had emerged within the Mexican-American community simply accommodated themselves to the local political machine

In the 1980s a large number of Mexicans in the city were able to regularize their status in the United States and acquire citizenship. This created the opening for the emergence of a new leadership within the community. The fact that Chicago facilitated immigrant involvement in the city's local institutions also created favorable conditions for the emergence of this leadership. Many of the leaders I identified (particularly those belonging to organizations based on the state of origin) first acquired their leadership skills by playing active roles in their local schools, or in initiatives launched by Chicago's police force to involve the population in the solution of their own problems. They also were active participants in their religious communities and some of them in organizations

that support first generation immigrants. In interviews, most of them referred to these experiences as their first active involvement in their community, and as an experience that later on motivated them to organize around their places of origin.

While the conditions were created for the emergence of a new leadership within the Mexican immigrant community, none of the local political institutions or national ethnic organizations profited from that. Since many Mexicans were illegally in the United States, and those that were able to regularize their status had yet to naturalize, they were not considered an important political constituency. While many of the emerging leaders kept links to Mexican political parties or had been at some point politically active in Mexico, they were not establishing clear links with local political parties or with Mexican-American organizations. During my research only one organization, *Concilio Hispano*, claimed to have contacts with American political authorities, but these contacts were not regular and did not materialize in any benefits for the organization. Furthermore until very recently they did not have contacts with Mexican-American and other ethnic organizations. In summary, Mexicans became more involved in their local communities but they were not being politically mobilized or organized by host city institutions such as previous immigrant groups had been.

At the same time, the Mexican immigrant leadership emerging in Chicago was suspicious of Mexican-Americans and Mexican-American organizations, which would have been natural allies, because Mexican-Americans were perceived as being ashamed of their Mexican heritage. In a context in which multiculturalism rather than the melting pot was becoming the paradigm, the new leaders within the Mexican community chose to celebrate and reestablish their connections with their places of origin rather than to claim

acceptance in their receiving society. This was reflected in the many activities they conducted to reaffirm their heritage such as beauty contests, the creation of folkloric dance groups from the state of origin, and the celebration of the culture of the state of origin one week per year. The Federation from Guerrero, for example established in 1998 the Guerrerense cultural week, which has included performances of Acapulco's Philharmonic Orchestra, and the state's folkloric ballets, as well as artistic exhibitions.

Because some of the immigrants to Chicago had political links with the Mexican left, and remained interested in Mexican politics for many years, it was only natural that when they saw signs that Mexico was democratizing they wished to participate in the democratization process. As a functionary of the Mexican consulate explained, the political campaign of Cuahutémoc Cárdenas had a strong impact on the established Mexican immigrant community in Chicago[111]. To a great extent, many of them saw the defeat of Cárdenas as proof that the Mexican state was still authoritarian. Since they linked the Mexican consulate with this authoritarian state, protest in front of this institution, particularly against the policies of specific consuls, became common during the 1990s.

At the same time, in the late 1980s and 1990s the Mexican government changed its policies towards Mexicans abroad and there was a new effort to organize the emigrant community. Chicago and Los Angeles became the focal points of this policy. Both cities had large concentrations of Mexican expatriates and had a long history of receiving Mexican migration. Furthermore, many persons of Mexican origin in these cities had regularized their status, and thus had greater resources and possibilities of becoming

[111] Interview with Consular official, August 10,2004

active in their places of origin. In Chicago the Mexican consulate was extensively involved in organizing the community.

At first Mexican consuls attempted to organize expatriates in a corporativist form, very much in the way politics were organized in Mexico. This however, produced major negative reactions within the community. This was, after all, a group of people that was being exposed to new patterns of social and political participation in their country of residence, even if they themselves were not politically active. They saw these efforts, then, as intrusive and against the community will.

Within the consulate, however, there were some functionaries focused on attending to and establishing relationships with the local community. Less tied to the needs of specific political administrations than the consuls and more sensible to the needs of the community, they worked on developing strong leaders and organizations.[112] This was not easy, however, because this was a community with low social and human capital. Although there were people with education and political experience, they were less interested in doing grass roots work and more in gaining a foothold in Mexico's national politics. Furthermore, there was the constant intrusion of governors and other political officials in Mexico who had their own agendas with respect to organizing their expatriate community in Chicago. Although these functionaries were also useful in helping immigrants organize, they also created divisions, as emigrants were constantly encouraged to take sides on political disputes that were taking place in their homeland states. Despite this, the grass roots efforts at grouping them conducted from the consulate and with the help of Mexican local authorities were working as immigrants were actually

[112] Although in other cities consular officials were involved in organizing the community, I did not see the same involvement and understanding that I saw in Chicago.

organizing around their places of origin and some leaders were even gaining the attention of the national authorities in Mexico.

From the interviews I conducted it became clear that Mexican consular officials understood that organizing the community, even if originally only around their places and country of origin, would imply empowering it towards the United States. With very limited resources coming from Mexico to support the community, the first-generation organizations being established in Chicago represented useful channels to reach the emigrant community, especially the undocumented. It was understood that there was bi-national work to do on subjects such as education, health, and immigration and that some of the best channels to do it included mobilizing the support of new leadership emerging within the community.

As Mexican political parties realized that Mexicans abroad could become an important political constituency, as well as an important economic source for development programs in Mexico, they started to conduct more regular visits to that city. There were also the visits of national functionaries such as Juan Hernández, until 2002 the presidential advisor for émigrés affairs, and of various members of Congress. President Fox himself also conducted major meetings in this city as well as in Los Angeles during various trips to the United States. Finally, there were the usual visits from governors and municipal presidents.

All these issues certainly increased the political expectations of Mexican expatriates. The new leadership started to make declarations about numerous subjects. There were declarations about corruption of electoral processes in states of origin such as Zacatecas, about the need to obtain the political right to vote in Mexican elections, the

characteristics that a law allowing expatriate voting should have, and the need to create a sixth electoral circumscription in Mexico to facilitate their participation as candidates in Mexico's political processes. There were also some declarations about the need to regularize the immigration status of Mexicans in the United States and for or against the plans of President Bush on that topic. Suddenly those leaders that were originally focused on raising money for development projects in their places of origin were also taking political positions, and visiting their state of origin to support political candidates or state authority's economic and social programs. These organizations were also establishing links with political entrepreneurs within the community that had been active in obtaining the right to vote from abroad for more than a decade but that lacked the grassroots base to gain the attention of Mexican authorities. Links were also established with similar organizations, notably in California, and many leaders became active participants of internet discussion groups. The extent to which the political views and agendas' followed by the leaders were in the interest of the members of their organizations or of the general Mexican immigrant community in the city is difficult to evaluate[113]. Nonetheless, as the leaders have been gaining the attention of Mexican national authorities they are also realizing that they could have some influence in their place of residence. By 2004, for example, various leaders of these organizations, especially those representing the Mexican states of Durango, Michoacán, Guerrero and Zacatecas were working together and had already established good relationships with local officials in Chicago, and even had gone to Washington to lobby federal authorities.

[113] This will have to be the subject of a future survey, since the research I conducted for this dissertation was, due to limited resources, predominantly focused on the leadership.

New steps in attempting to develop more encompassing goals include the creation of two organizations that emerged mostly from the SFs in the area: the *Coordinación de Federaciones Mexicanas del Medio Oeste* or COMMO and the *Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas* (Confemex). COMMO grew out of groups that were created to support the political campaign of Vicente Fox from Chicago, including pro-PAN supporters and members of the National Action Party, and Mimexca, which was linked to *Amigos de Fox* (Fox's Friends) the political group that conducted his campaign. After that, various SFs and other organizations joined their efforts and created COMMO. The organization had a bi-national agenda, which included improving the conditions of the Mexican community in Chicago, although its first priority was to obtain the right to vote from abroad. Because of its attempt to ally different groups with various political ties in Mexico along with the Federations, it was difficult for its leadership to achieve consensus on even the most basic issues. For this reason, this organization was never able to represent the immigrant community in Chicago, and though it still exists, it has become almost irrelevant.

The second organization, which seems to have a more promising future, the Council of Mexican Federations (CONFEMEX) is composed only of SFs. Created in 2003, it has adopted the general agenda of the organizations based on place of origin, including the promotion of major investment projects in Mexico, but also has political and social goals focused on the host society. As its first president put it, "we realized that we live here and we need to focus on improving our living conditions here too."[114] On the social agenda this organization has promoted scholarship programs to help the children of immigrants in Chicago, particularly the undocumented, to go to university. This has been

[114] Source: Personal interview with the president of CONFEMEX

done through finding donors among wealthy members of the Mexican community in the area. On the political front they have established relationships with local officials and are considering supporting the campaigns of those politicians that are willing to work in favor of the Mexican community. Yet, this group is quite new and it is unclear how effective it will be.

The main challenge Mexican immigrants face in Chicago is to become more cohesively organized to increase their political leverage vis-à-vis the local political machine and gain more access to the decision-making process, particularly on those topics that affect the immigrant community including education, health, housing and policing policies. The emergence of organizations that can maintain their independence from Mexican and local political parties is also important, however, because that will allow the Mexican-origin community to build alliances with other immigrant and ethnic groups in Chicago and thus increase its political influence on the city's politics. A key thing that Mexicans need to do, and that I did not observe in my research, is to build more alliances with Mexican-American organizations, which have greater political experience. Mexican-Americans will also benefit from such relationships, because their political future in the city is highly dependent on the political fate of the immigrant community. Overall, the main question is whether the Mexican-origin population, and more generally the Latino community in Chicago, can become part of an effective coalition that can advance the interests of this community more than has happened so far.

6.2.1 The Role of Organizations in Immigrant Incorporation

First-generation Mexican immigrants have organized mostly around their homeland. The sample of organizations I considered in Chicago represents no exception

to this rule. I studied five organizations based on place of origin including one HTA, *the Club Acapetlahuaya de Guerrero*, and four SFs, including the *Federación de Clubes Unidos de Zacatecanos en Illinois*, the *Federación de Clubes Michoacanos en Illinois (Fedecmi)*, the *Federación de Guerrerenses en Chicago*, and *Durango Unido*.

Although their main interests are not focused on their host society, these organizations perform an important if still limited role in helping immigrants adapt and incorporate into the city's polity. First, they allow immigrants to socialize and exchange general information about their experiences in their host country. By participating in them, members can adapt more easily to their new city and avoid the usual isolation that the immigration process implies.

Second, these organizations function in many cases as discussion forums in which members develop notions about civic participation and involvement and about the social and political life of their city and country of residence. For example, during my research I had the opportunity of attending one of the meetings of *Durango Unido* a few weeks after the September 11th attacks. During this meeting members of the organization chose to discuss how these attacks had affected their lives in the United States. Several of them expressed patriotic sentiments toward their adopted country and some explained that their children were in the American military and would participate in the war if there was one. They also spoke about how important it was for them to identify with and be part of American political life. An interesting aspect that emerged from this discussion is that many members spoke as Americans, even when the identity of the organization was clearly identified as "Mexican".

Third, through these organizations Mexicans learn about democracy and democratic procedures. In all the organizations I studied in Chicago the leadership was democratically elected, with the exception of the *Club Acapetlahuaya de Guerrero*. This is obviously a basic and necessary skill for immigrants to become more active in various American institutions. The most visible organization in this regard is the *Federación de Clubes Unidos de Zacatecanos en Illinois,* which has had an elaborate democratic process for selecting its leaders every two years since 1995.

This organization acquired a large building with the support of the government of Zacatecas. There it holds its meetings and other activities, including the provision of computing courses. Along with the Federation of Los Angeles, it has also focused on creating leadership cadres within the second generation so that they can become active participants in the political life of their city of residence. Other federations such as those from Michoacán, Jalisco, and Guerrero have been taking similar steps and becoming more active in the adaptation process of their communities in Chicago. In this regard, these organizations are also playing an important role in the adaptation process of the immigrant community and may play a role in helping accelerate the political integration of the second generation.

Despite these positive developments, these organizations still face major challenges. The most serious is how to overcome the limitations imposed by their membership policies, determined as they are by the places of origin. They need to broaden their activities to reach the majority of the Mexican immigrant population in the city. A second challenge is to avoid polarization along Mexican party lines, a situation that is already undermining their success. Finally, they must become more

institutionalized and able to form larger leadership cadres that can better understand the political dynamics of both the home and host societies. So far, the leaders of these organizations have been relatively efficient, but have worked without any major directives. Among other things, they have yet to develop and articulate a political agenda relevant to the needs of the immigrant community they attempt to represent.

In summary, the organizations based on place of origin in Chicago, represent a first step towards the eventual incorporation of an immigrant community that was historically poorly organized into the city's political life, by facilitating their better adaptation, by allowing them to gain first-hand experience in civic and democratic participation, and by facilitating the development of leadership cadres. However, they are still short of becoming major actors because they have not yet designed a strategy to overcome the obstacles and take advantages of the structure of opportunity they confront in the city. New possibilities, however, are represented by organizations such as COMMO and Confemex.

I also considered two organizations with a strictly political character. These organizations are not based only in Chicago, but they were either founded there or have some of their major leaders living there. These include CIME and CDPME. Although these organizations have as among their membership some of the most well-known political entrepreneurs in the city, their gaze has mostly focused on Mexico.

Finally, I studied a service provider organization, the *Concilio Hispano.* This organization has been providing services to Mexican immigrants for small dues since 1987. Its main accomplishment was to initiate and win the lawsuit against Money-Gram,

which charged prohibitive commissions for remittances sent to Mexico and other countries.

6.3 New York

In contrast to Chicago, Dallas, and Los Angeles, Mexicans in New York do not represent the largest Hispanic group in the area nor are they the largest immigrant group. Because most Mexican immigrants to New York are of recent arrival, it can be considered a new labor migration area. Immigrants are predominantly male, without legal work permits, and work long hours. Although there are some successful businessmen, such as Jaime Lucero, owner with his brother of Gold and Silver Inc, a company that distributes clothes to America's major chain stores, most newcomers are poor and uneducated. In contrast to Chicago and Los Angeles, upward mobility within the Mexican community is limited. Few benefited from IRCA and from the family reunification policies that in the Midwest and the Southwest facilitated the emergence of a small but vibrant Mexican middle class. Furthermore, most newcomers to this city come from the Mixteca Baja region, a poor and underdeveloped area, and some of them do not speak Spanish as a first language. As a result it is not surprising that this New York is where I found the weakest organizations and the most acute divisions within the community.

As in the other cities, the Mexican consulate attempted to organize the community in the area. However, New York was never a priority because the community was relatively small and new. For years the official in charge of the relations with the local community organized soccer matches between different Mexican teams. His presence helped create strong soccer leagues in the region but the transition from being active in a

sport to being active in a community association as happened in other cities did not really take place. To a certain extent, the different Mexican consuls that passed through New York during the 1990s were not especially interested in organizing the community and did not especially support the activities of the officials in charge of developing relations with expatriates. Governors, and municipal presidents, were also never an important force in mobilizing the community as in other places. Most Mexicans in the region are from Puebla. Although governors of that state such as Melquiades Morales did visit the community occasionally, they never established a consistent program to institutionalize the links with the Poblano community. Morales, however, did suggest the integration of the community around *Casa Puebla,* the only organization in New York that can be considered equivalent to the state federations predominant in other cities. The businessman Jaime Lucero, however, provides the major financial support, and thus its destiny largely depends on him. In my research I gathered that although *Casa Puebla* claimed to represent the Poblano organizations in the city, many do not seem to accept this claim. For instance, *Casa Puebla* seems to operate more as a service organization than as a state federation, since most of its activities have focused on supporting small Mexican businesses in New York City. They also claim to sponsor education, health and athletic programs, as well as tourism to the state of Puebla.

Casa Puebla played, nonetheless, an important role in supporting the Mexican and Latino communities during the September 11 attacks on the Twin Towers. Immigrants and their families affected by these events were encouraged to call or to visit its offices so that they could be helped or referred to the relevant city authorities. This was done with the help of *Univision* the Hispanic television company to which Lucero

had access. *Casa Puebla's* role after September 11 allowed it to establish a relationship with other ethnic organizations such as Lulac and local non-governmental organizations in the city. Also it established a relationship with FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). Although there were projects to expand the scope of *Casa Puebla* after these events, they failed to materialize. *Casa Puebla* did support undocumented Mexican university students in their lobbying efforts to obtain in-state tuition for children of illegal immigrants wishing to go to college in New York.

Besides *Casa Puebla,* the Mexican consulate reports that there are close to 30 HTAs in the city, most of which are organized by people from Puebla. However, not all of these organizations have a HTA profile or are really active as I discovered during my research. Some of them operate as civic organizations oriented more towards the US than towards Mexico, as is the case of Mixteca Organization Inc., which has a service provider profile.

Some of these organizations, however, have been in place for a long time. The *Club Solidaridad de Chinantla* (Solidarity Club Chinantla), for example, has sent money to the hometown since 1970. This organization has a rather exceptional profile, because for all these years it has been predominantly in touch only with local authorities in Mexico. It is one of the few organizations that I identified that was not interested in Mexican politics at the national or state levels nor did it wish to establish links with other Mexican groups. When I asked them if they supported advancing political rights in their homeland, they said that they would be interested only in obtaining the franchise to participate at the local level.

Civic and Service Provider Organizations

Civic organizations seem to be one of the most widespread models of organizing for Mexican immigrants in NYC and surrounding areas. Data from the consulate in show that in 2004 there were 17 civic organizations in New York, four in New Jersey, and five in Connecticut. A relatively few people control these organizations, which focus most of their work on cultural and social activities. Many of them work predominantly with local authorities to promote Mexican culture and civic events. They seem to represent the common pattern of organizing for immigrants besides the HTAs model (such as Solidarity Club Chinantla) when there is no serious intervention by the home country to mobilize them[115]. Although organizations like these exist in other cities, this organizational form seems to be more prominent in the area because of the more limited role the consulate and Mexican local authorities have played in organizing them.

Among service providers, I studied *CECOMEX*, and *Asociación Tepeyac*. *CECOMEX* emerged in East Harlem to provide services to Mexican and other immigrants for a fee. According to its president, its creators were inspired by Dominican and Puerto Rican organizations, though the organization itself has not established any links with them. This group, however, has sporadically worked with city councilors and even with Congressman Charles Rangel. I was not able to identify the extent to which *CECOMEX*'s work reaches the community. It seems to me that its leaders have been pragmatic and have accommodated with local politicians and with Mexican authorities in the consulate, arguing that they represent the Mexican community in the area.

[115] In other words, if the Mexican state would not have been organizing the community most first generation organizations would have probably been small, isolated HTAs such as *Club Solidaridad Chinantla*, or civic organizations focus on celebrating Mexican heritage in the city of residence. Today, however, all of these organizations work around the consulate which contacts them sporadically for different events related with Mexico.

Asociación Tepeyac is probably the most interesting organization in the city. Lead by a Jesuit priest, Fr.Joel Magallán, this association was originally created by New York City's archdiocese with the hope of helping the Mexican community as it supported Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in the past[116]. To organize the community it relied on Mexicans' fervor for the virgin of Guadalupe and organized around 40 independent committees, which provide various services and activities to Mexicans in different parts of the city. *Tepeyac* is the most vocal Mexican organization in the United States around the need to support the undocumented community. This organization has rejected the different regularization proposals of presidents Fox and Bush because it considers them to be only new versions of a guest worker program that does not guarantee access to citizenship and thus to political rights. It participates in the National Coalition for Amnesty and Dignity, which has as its main goal obtaining permanent residency for all the people without documents in the United States. For four years in a row *Tepeyac* has conducted the Guadalupan Torch march from Mexico City to New York, as a commemoration of the Guadalupe Virgin's celebration on December 12. The goal of the march is to defend the dignity of undocumented immigrants and to promote an amnesty. This event has gained the attention of Mexican and American newspapers and has helped *Tepeyac* become a well-known organization.

Despite this, the organization has not extended its links with other organizations in the city. Except for the issue of domestic violence, it has done no work with Dominican and Puerto Rican organizations. The group claims to have received support from Maldef and La Raza, but this endorsement has not materialized in continuous contacts with these groups.

[116] See the organization website: www.tepeyac.org/origen2ht

Overall, I did not identify in New York City and its metropolitan area any political organization focused predominantly on advancing the political rights of the Mexican diaspora in Mexico. This issue seems to be a preoccupation of those Mexicans able to formally settle in the United States as a result of IRCA and other immigration laws, a group that is not very large in New York. However, thanks to the links they established with other associations in the Midwest and Southwest, they had become active in the cause.

In December 2003, for example, prior to the approval of the right to vote from abroad in presidential elections, the Mexican community in the area organized an event on the subject whose program included a strange mix of Mexican and American political figures including the Mexican consul of the city, the governor of New York, George Pataki, New York State Senators Olga Méndez and David Paterson, Councilors Iram Monserrat and Phillip Reed, US Congressman Charles Rangel, José Murat governor of Oaxaca, and Mario Marín Torres, PRI candidate for the governorship of Puebla. Some but not all of the people invited attended the event (Pataki, for example, was absent). This situation shows that Mexicans in New York, even if not well organized, have been gaining the attention of Mexican and American authorities, like Mexicans in other cities. This attention clearly reflects the fact that the Mexican community is considered a potential political constituency on both sides of the border and politicians are willing to support their cause if that may bring a political profit.

To what extent, however, does the participation of state and local officials in these kinds of events attest to the political incorporation of Mexicans in New York City itself? In a way this support of immigrant causes reflects a pattern reminiscent of Tammany

Hall's attitude toward Jews and Italians. At that time, however, they also provided newcomers with other benefits (economic and material) that facilitated their adaptation in the USA. Mexican immigrants to New York, in contrast, have not received any such benefits[117], and their situation seems to be more vulnerable than that of previous immigrant groups if only because the majority of them are illegal.

6.4 Los Angeles

In 1993 González Gutiérrez argued that because they tend to be poor and disenfranchised, Mexican immigrants are not likely to exercise political leadership on behalf of the Mexican community in California. "Almost no Latino leader of a national or even regional stature is foreign born," González Gutiérrez argued, and then he added: "It has been the native born population, not the immigrants who have increased the political power of the community and made visible its purchasing power" (Gonzáles Gutiérrez 1993).

A little more than a decade later, part but not all of González Gutierrez's observations remain true. Despite the large numbers of Mexicans who have naturalized in California and in the Los Angeles region, there is still few if any first-generation Mexican immigrants with national, regional or local stature[118]. Although more Mexicans have naturalized and are enfranchised than when he wrote his article, and they certainly represented an important element in Villaraigosa's election as the first Latino mayor, the Mexican immigrant community in Los Angeles remains represented predominantly by

[117] A big exception, probably, is the fact that George Pataki supported an initiative to grant in-state tuition to the children of undocumented immigrants that want to go to a university in the state.

[118] There are some exceptions. For example, José Huízar, originally from Zacatecas, who became the first Latino immigrant to be elected to the city council, after he run to fill the position left by Antonio Villaraigosa. Another exception is Carlos Olamendi, a businessman with connections to the Republican Party that participated in Schwarzenegger's political campaign, and became a member of his Transition Committee. Olamendi was also appointed by President George W. Bush to the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the Kennedy Center.

American born Mexican-American leaders, who very often have interests that do not coincide with those of the first generation.

The Mexican immigrant community of Los Angeles, however, has been developing in the last decade a large number of organizations and a strong leadership that has started, recently, to become a more significant voice. These leaders realized that to advance their interest in the USA they needed to join their efforts and develop a local and regional agenda that includes lobbying political authorities and mobilizing the immigrant vote. Toward that end they created the CPFMLA. However it is not yet clear how effective they will be because these efforts have just started.

HTAs and State Federations

When González Gutiérrez published his work in 1993, Mexican immigrants in Los Angeles were changing from sojourners into permanent settlers. Many Mexicans had just regularized their immigration status and very few had applied for citizenship. Furthermore, many were just moving up the economic ladder and obtaining the sort of stable socioeconomic status that would allow them to become more involved.

Certainly, at that time there were already some HTAs and even a few state federations composed of immigrant groups who had arrived in the late 1940s mainly through guest workers programs (the *bracero* programs). The most well-known of these were the *Federación de Zacatecanos del Sur de California* (Zacatecan Federation of Southern California), created in 1986, the *Federación de Clubes Jalisciences* (Federation of associations from Jalisco) created in 1991, and the *Fraternidad Sinaloense* (Fraternity from Sinaloa) also created in 1991. As was noted in Chapter 4, the Zacatecan Federation was the first state federation in the United States and was created with the support of

Governor Genaro Borrego, who perceived early on that the future of his state, which was the one that was sending the most emigrants per capita, was linked to the fate of the Zacatecan community in the United States. The other two federations were created under the auspices of José Angel Pescador Osuna, at the time the Mexican consul in Los Angeles.

González Gutiérrez, who at the time he wrote his paper worked as consul for community affairs at the Mexican consulate in Los Angeles, reflects the changing attitude of the Mexican government toward expatriates in the city:

> Given the huge Mexican-origin population in the greater Los Angeles area, it makes sense to take advantage of their loyalty to their regions of origin, which is a much stronger link than their attachment to class or type of employment (let alone a political party). Sharing in a community of origin creates in the 'paisanos' a reinforced commitment to one another for mutual assistance in a hostile land and strengthens their self imposed duty to help the communities they left behind (Gonzáles Gutiérrez 1993).

Following this idea, the federal government, with the help of state and local authorities from Mexico, became the main organizing force of the Mexican community in Los Angeles as well as in other cities. This was done through the Program for Mexican Communities Abroad, which was implemented in 1990 by the Salinas administration. The goal was not only to increase their involvement in economic development projects in their places of origin, but also to strengthen the community in their place of residence so that they could better defend their rights and interests(Gonzáles Gutiérrez 1995). This was particularly urgent in California where anti-immigrant sentiment was high.

It is revealing that no indigenous institution in Los Angeles made similar efforts to mobilize and organize this community despite the fact that a large number of the Mexican-origin had access to citizenship[119]. As a result, the most common form of organization for Mexican immigrants became the HTAs and the SFs. Although the HTAs had been historically a natural form for immigrants to organize, they could have also created or joined simultaneously other types of organizations more focused on the host society. That did not happen even in a political environment in which Mexicans were the constant target of anti-immigrant campaigns. This reflects the depoliticized character of the city and the incapacity of local political parties, unions and ethnic organizations to bring newcomers into the political process.

Once established, for instance, associations based on the state of origin had a hard time gaining attention, even if on an individual basis some of their members had participated or were members of unions or Hispanic organizations. In my research I learned that some federations had contact with Mexican-American leaders, particularly in 1994 when they joined efforts to fight against Proposition 187. This was the case, for example, of the *Federación Jalisicience,* which donated money to oppose this initiative. These contacts, however, did not continue, even when other anti-immigrant initiatives were on the ballot over the 1990s. To a great extent this had to with the fact that Mexican-American leaders saw these organizations as parochial and incapable of becoming a political force (Zabin and Escala Rabada 1998). Local unions were also not focused on organizing immigrant workers, with or without documents, much less on establishing ties with their emerging organizations, despite the fact that they could have

[119] NALEO, however, did play an active role in helping newcomers to naturalize (Zabin and Escala Rabada 1998)

become an important grass-roots base. Except for a few occasions, they did not commit resources to such efforts (Milkman and Wong 2001)[120].

For the emerging leaders, limited involvement with local authorities of the host society had to do with their inexperience[121] and widespread confusion about the rules for non-profit organizations participating in political activities. As they gained influence in Mexico, however, they also became more sophisticated in their political attitudes towards the USA. Informally they started to support the political campaigns of local officials, particularly those of Latino origin or people that supported the immigrant community. Participation consisted mostly of the encouragement of members possessing US citizenship to register and vote.

With the emergence of the *Frente Cívico Zacatecano* (Zacatecan Civic Front) as a result of divisions within the Zacatecan Federation over politics in the state of origin it became easier to get involved in politics. The *Frente Cívico* had explicit political purposes both towards Zacatecas and California and, more generally, towards Mexico and the United States. For this reason it did not seek a non-profit status and in time, when differences between differing groups were resolved, it became the political arm of the Zacatecan Federation.

In Zacatecas, the *Frente* became a key supporter of Andrés Bermudez Miramontes, the "Tomato King", in his successful electoral campaign for the municipal

[120] As Milkman and Wong explain, foreign- born workers especially from Mexico and Central America "are the core of the low-wage workforce" (Milkman and Wong 2001) in Southern California, and contrary to what many may think they can be organized by labor unions regardless of their legal status. This happened already successfully with Janitorial workers in 1990 and with drywall Hangers in 1992.

[121] Carlos González Gutierrez has pointed out that Mexican immigrants generally do not come with economic and social expectations from the American state, and are also remarkable unaware of the advantages they could draw from the political institutions establish as a result of the civil rights revolution in the United States. For this reason they need leaders that can not only mobilize them but also break their historical inhibitions to rely on the state or obtain political benefits through the political process (Gonzáles Gutiérrez 1995, p. 74)

presidency of Jeréz, thus becoming the first Mexican emigrant with American citizenship to be elected to office in Mexico. Bermúdez won the election, but due to residence requirements in Zacatecas he was not able to take office. After that, the Frente proposed a new law to allow Zacatecans to become political candidates in their state of origin without having previous residence there. The measure was finally approved by the Zacatecan Congress in 2003, and running again for office, Bermudez won election in Jérez (Cano 2004).

In California, the *Frente* actively participated in the political campaigns of Democrat Lou Correa and Linda Sánchez for the House of Representatives; Miguel Polido, mayor of Santa Ana; Jesse Loera, mayor of Norwalk; Loreta Sánchez and Grace Napolitano, members of Congress; Gray Davis and Cruz Bustamante, former governor and lieutenant governor of California, respectively; and Lee Vaca, Los Angeles Sheriff, among others.

To a great extent, the *Frente* became a model for the creation of the CPFMLA, which was established in 2003 with a bilateral political agenda and has positioned itself as an organization that defends migrant rights both in Mexico and California. Other organizations such as the *Frente Indigena Oaxaqueño Binacional*, have also pursued binational goals in defense of immigrant rights, particularly of those of indigenous origin[122].

In the last few years, these organizations have thus become political referents and intermediaries between the Mexican community in Los Angeles and Mexican and Californian authorities.

[122] In 2003, for example, the FIOB actively opposed the election of Schwarzenegger as governor of the state and also Proposition 54, which attempted to revive in California the same measures included in Proposition 187.

The Organizations

Because of the large Mexican community that lives in the area, as well as its historical roots, Mexican immigrants have joined more organizations based on their communities and state of origin in Los Angeles than probably anywhere else. In 2003 the Mexican consulate estimated the existence of 250 HTAs and eight federations. In 2006 it is estimated that there are 300 HTAs and 12 federations in the Los Angeles metropolitan area[123].

Internal documents from the Mexican consulate in Los Angeles (CGMLA 2002) point out that the large and increasing number of these organizations, their constant communication with the consulate, as well as the influence they have acquired in their country of origin, make them salient to the Mexican government. For instance, the documents assert that the Mexican government cannot ignore them in its design and implementation of policies towards Mexicans abroad, if it wants these policies to be successful.

For my research I interviewed the leadership of four state federations including those from Zacatecas, Michoacán, Jalisco and Sinaloa, and I attended a meeting of the *Federación de Clubes de Michoacanos,* which was at the time (2002) in its the formative stage. Politics was a major subject at the meeting. Attendees discussed how they wanted to deal with Mexican politics, and the extent to which they wanted to be either political or apolitical. These discussions indicate how difficult it has been for Mexican organizations to decide what to do about their Mexican agenda. On the one hand, they want to influence

[123] *Federación de Clubes Jalisciences, Federación de Clubes Zacatecanos del Sur de California, Federación de Clubes Michoacanos, Federación Oaxaqueña de Comunidades y Organizaciones Indigenas en California, Frente Oaxaqueño de Organizaciones Indigenas, Federación de Clubes Duranguenses, Fraternidad Sinaloense de California, Asociación de Clubes Nayaritas,* and *Asociación de Clubes Zacatecas, Casa Guanajuato, Federación del Distrito Federal, Federación de Querétaro*

the economic development of their places of origin by participating in development projects together with the state authorities. On the other hand, by doing so they have become influential in the political and policy processes of their states and, therefore, they are constantly pursued by local politicians who want to get their support for various political causes. Finding the right balance has been difficult and will probably be more difficult now that the right to vote from abroad has been granted.

Political Organizations

A significant discovery in my research is that Los Angeles had political activists within the Mexican community involved in advancing the rights of laborers in the agricultural sector and also in some local unions in the manufacturing and service sectors. Some of these activists were members of the federations. Except for a few cases, however, they had not established any organizations devoted to advance the interests of Mexican immigrants that had gained the attention of either Mexican or American authorities. Clearly the main players in this city, as in Chicago, were the associations based on the state of origin, probably because the Mexican government had been active in both cities organizing them. These activists, however, probably had an influence in helping the federations become more politically active over the years both towards Mexico and California.

With respect to organizations with a clear political agenda towards Mexico, I identified MIMEXCA, which evolved from a temporary organization created to support the campaign of Vicente Fox from the US. As expressed in its founding documents, this organization operates mostly in California, Texas, Arizona and Illinois, and it supports political reform in Mexico. It also intends to perform civic activities by providing

services to Mexican immigrants in the United States. However, these two organizations have not made much of a mark within the community.

6.5 Dallas: Mexican Immigrants in a New Gateway City

Mexicans have been in Texas for a long time, but Mexican immigration to Dallas is fairly recent. Most immigrants arrived in the last three decades, after the implementation of IRCA. Mexicans represent the largest newcomer group in the city and display an amazing rate of growth: from 1990 to 2000 they grew 203% in the Dallas-Forth Worth area (Sanchez and Weiss-Armush 2003).

Mexican immigrants to Dallas come from various places in Mexico, particularly from states in the center and north of the Country. The largest provider of emigrants is Guanajuato, followed by San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas. Because many immigrants to this city come from Guanajuato, a religiously conservative state, their attitudes and political behavior, particularly those towards their homeland, have been somewhat different from those observed in other cities. The emerging leadership within the Dallas Mexican community established a good relationship with the well-known PAN leader Carlos Medina Plascencia, but most importantly with Vicente Fox, since both were governors of the state in the 1990s[124]. With his impressive stature and frank manners, Fox became enormously popular in Dallas, even among Mexican immigrants who were not from Guanajuato. According to testimony of local leaders and scholars, he was treated as a media celebrity, people wanting to get a short glimpse of him and get their picture taken with him. It is not incidental, thus, that when he became a presidential candidate in 2000 there was a lot of enthusiasm among Dallas-Forth Worth expatriates

[124] Until the early 1990s, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) governed all Mexican states. In 1991 the PAN was finally able to win the elections in Baja California Norte and then in 1992 in Guanajuato.

about his candidacy. In different interviews during my research, people acknowledged that they called their family members in Mexico to urge them to vote for him. Although immigrants in Dallas were not the only ones giving this type of support to Fox's campaign, they held some of the most optimistic views I found about him and, certainly, the good experiences that Fox had while visiting the city when he was governor positively influenced his attitudes towards émigrés. The commitment of his presidency to those residing abroad was undoubtedly shaped during his trips to Dallas. In fact, the person he chose to head the presidential office for emigrant affairs, Juan Hernández, was a Mexican-American professor born in Forth Worth whom he met during a visit to Dallas. In a newspaper interview (Barbosa 2001) Hernández explained that he first met with Fox when he invited him to give a lecture at the University of Texas in Dallas. After that encounter, the then governor of Guanajuato named him special advisor on affairs with the United States and opened the Guanajuato Trade Office, a commercial center established in Dallas to promote Guanajuato's products in American soil—mostly crafts, furniture, and shoes-- which was led by Hernández.

The active role of the government of Guanajuato in contacting emigrants during the 1990s helped create what could be considered the strongest first-generation Mexican organization in Dallas: *Casa Guanajuato.* This organization, which was made up of some HTAs already existent in the city but is not properly a state federation because membership is individual, received substantial economic and institutional support from both the governments of Medina Placencia and Fox. This backing was certainly crucial for the organization's emergence and survival[125].

[125] The administration of Medina Placencia, especially, gave the organization $10,000 that was used for the initial payment of a warehouse where it could hold its meetings and activities. This building has been

Despite the active participation of the government of Guanajuato in organizing emigrants from that state, and the apparent enthusiasm that Fox's campaign produced among first generation Mexicans living in the area, the expatriate community in the Dallas-Fort Worth region has shown little political mobilization towards the homeland and almost none towards the host country at the local and/or national levels, particularly if compared with the expatriate communities of Chicago and Los Angeles.

Although within the first-generation Mexican community there are some political organizations and entrepreneurs, their influence and leadership capacities are limited. Dallas, certainly, does not have the kind of political activists that can be found in Chicago or in Los Angeles and that have played a pivotal role in the campaign to obtain the right to vote from abroad. Although the leaders that have emerged within the Dallas Mexican community have turned their attention to political events in their homeland, and may even be supporters of Mexico's major political parties, many activities performed by local organizations including by those organized around the state of origin are focused on the host society. For instance, it is in Dallas and to a lesser extent in New York where I encountered organizations with the greatest focus on the host country. This interest in the adopted society, however, has not turned into effective political action of any type. In consonance with the anti-political environment that predominates in the Dallas Fort-Worth area, Mexican leaders I interviewed displayed a marked tendency to express a disdain for politics and political action and were suspicious of both Mexican and American political parties, even though some of them had supported Fox's campaign. A Mexican-American leader who has worked with the community explained that Mexicans

---

gradually paid through the contributions of the members of *Casa Guanajuato* as well as through raise funding actions.

in this city do not feel comfortable taking part in local political institutions, in great part because they did not do that in Mexico, but also because local political institutions in Dallas are not very inviting[126]. In this business-oriented city in which partisan politics and unions are almost non-existent, newcomers are expected to provide for themselves without relying on public support. It is not an accident, therefore, that most of the activities that immigrant organizations perform around the host country in this city are social and cultural in nature.

The organizations

The predominant type of organization that first-generation Mexicans have established in Dallas is that based on the place of origin. Although the Mexican consulate does not have precise numbers, it is estimated that there are between 30 and 40 HTAs in the area. Many of these, however, seem to work much more in isolation than the ones in Chicago and Los Angeles, not being integrated into strong state federations. The smaller number of organizations based on the place of origin, and their lesser levels of institutionalization, reflects the fact that the Mexican consulate in this city has not been very active in mobilizing and organizing them as in Chicago and Dallas. Functionaries in the Consulate in charge of the relationship with the Mexican community have been changed often and there has not been follow-up of the work that has been done. Therefore although these officials did play a role in helping organize the community around the place of origin and in the creation of some state federations, they have not given these organizations the kind of consistent support that has been crucial for the establishment and institutionalization of similar associations in other cities.

[126] Interview with Executive director of LULAC in Texas on September 1st, 2004.

State and local authorities from Mexico have not been very active in organizing this community either. This has to do on one hand with the fact that except for Guanajuato, many emigrants come from states that have not been very active in mobilizing and organizing expatriate communities such as San Luis Potosí, Durango and Nuevo León. On the other hand, states that have been interested in mobilizing their émigrés such as Zacatecas and, more recently, Michoacán have not made Dallas a priority. Their expatriate communities are as a result much less organized than in other cities.

I identified seven associations based on the state of origin (*Casa Guanajuato, La Familia Nuevo León, Asociación Potosina del Norte de Texas, Federación Club de Zacatecanos de Dallas, El Despertar de Durango, La Federación de Michoacán* and *Asociación Guerrerense del Norte de Texas).* I attended activities and conducted focus group meetings and or in-depth interviews with the leadership of *Casa Guanajuato, La Familia Nuevo León, Asociación Potosina del Norte de Texas,* and the *Federación Club de Zacatecanos de Dallas.* In addition, I interviewed the president of a HTA, the *Grupo de Zacatecanos del Sombrerete*, which has not joined the federation from Zacatecas. The Federations I studied are apparently the strongest in the city, although as I said before, they are not as institutionalized as their counterparts in other cities.

Overall, most of these organizations follow the model of *Casa Guanajuato* which has not only counted on continuing institutional support from Mexico but had strong leadership that has made the organization stable and successful. An interesting aspect of this organization is that its activities focus as much on Mexico as the United States. For example, it has followed a strategy of diminishing the chances of the second generation

becoming members of street gangs and getting lost in the process of assimilation into American society. For instance, the house they bought for their headquarters was in an area dominated by Mexican gangs. The association painted murals on their outside walls. Initially, gang members vandalized the murals with graffiti. The members of *Casa Guanajuato* responded by painting murals again and again until finally the gangs stopped. Relying on the experience of some members and of others who have offered help, the organization has used its facilities to provide evening classes for children and youngsters, including karate, dance, and English lessons. *Casa Guanajuato* also organizes art exhibitions and other cultural activities that draw members of the Mexican community together. It also has started to get in touch with non-profit grass-roots organizations that work with immigrant organizations such as Dallas International Group.

Since the beginning of 2000 *Casa Guanajuato* and the other Mexican organizations in the city collaborated to create the *Centro Comunitario Mexicano* (Mexican community Center), a service provider organization that targets the Mexican community. This organization has relied on the professional experience of highly-educated members of the Mexican community. One of its major accomplishments was to integrate a health service directory and guide that was distributed within the immigrant population, so that low-income people and the undocumented can know what health services are accessible in the region. The organization also mounts programs that focus on improving the education levels of newcomers, as well as facilitating their social adaptation. This organization is part of a Latino network promoted by *Dallas International* and attempts to work with other organizations. However, its work is fairly new and it is not clear if it will be able to survive.

Another recent service organization is *Casa del Inmigrante* (the House of the Immigrant). This organization, which was not directly studied in this research due to its novelty, has the support of people linked with Lulac. Although it has made declarations in support of immigrants it is difficult to know the extent and effectiveness of its work.

Political organizations

My data show that there are few leaders with previous political experience in Mexico or that have acquired skills through their involvement in local institutions in Dallas. As a local consular official posed it, people with previous political experience in Mexico simply did not migrate to Dallas: "this type of network never took place." The limited political mobilization of Mexicans in the city is also explained, however, by the political environment that discourages the involvement of newcomers and minorities just as it does that of the general population. This contrasts with the experience of Mexicans in Chicago where partisan politics, strong labor unions, and a tradition of social activism have facilitated the emergence of more politicized leaders within the first-generation Mexican community.

Despite this fact, some Mexican immigrants in Dallas have been politicized by events taking place in the homeland. These immigrants participated in the creation of CIME (Corchado 2000). The organization was founded by a Mexican business man involved with media, but it also has included smaller, pre-existing political groups, such as *Mexicanos Unidos* 2000, which was active in the campaign to get the right to vote for Mexicans abroad. These activists have not yet focused on their host society. Nonetheless, during the interviews I conducted they recognized the importance of increasing the political participation of Mexicans in their host country.

6.6 Conclusions and Recommendations

In the last few decades a large number of Mexican organizations have emerged with explicit or implicit political agendas focused mostly on the homeland. This could be an obstacle to Mexican immigrant incorporation in the USA. My research suggests that this is not necessarily the case. As I have shown, organizations based on the state of origin became the predominant organizational form of this community because they were mobilized by the Mexican consulates and by other Mexican authorities. In none of the cities I studied did local institutions or ethnic organizations play an important initial role in helping to mobilize and organize this community. It is mostly after they were organized around strong state federations and similar organizations that host state authorities showed an interest in them and saw the emerging leaders as potential intermediaries with the rest of the immigrant community.

As they have become more sophisticated, Mexican associations have also tended to focus more on their host country and are starting to develop important activities that may allow them to facilitate the incorporation of Mexican immigrants into their adopted cities. This situation, however, will be affected by the type of interactions they establish with American authorities at different levels of government and by the opportunity structures they face in each city.

CHAPTER 7

THE POLITICS OF THE MEXICAN DIASPORA FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

This work has shown that with different degrees and intensities Mexicans have been incorporating into their home and host polities at the national and sub-national levels in the last two decades. Because of the long and continuing process of migration from Mexico to the United States, both countries are undergoing profound demographic, social and political changes. These factors alone, however, do not explain the acceleration of political participation that some sectors of this community are showing or appear likely to show in the future. Mexicans have been migrating to the United States for a long time, and they have seldom been politically active as an immigrant group. Since the 1990s, however, the ways they plug into politics have changed in response to their interactions with home and host states institutions and authorities.

Each American city and institutional context has produced different and evolving patterns of political engagement as well as varied paths towards the political incorporation of Mexican newcomers. At the same time, the combination of the political opportunities and constraints created by both home and host states national and sub-national policies and politics has created a unique configuration in their process of integration.

What can the evidence I produced tell us about the present and future political behavior of Mexicans living in the United States? I posed a number of empirical questions at the outset: First, which is more important in shaping Mexican immigrants' political behavior and incorporation, (1) characteristics of the immigrant community and migration flows or (2) the institutional frameworks they face when they come to America? Second, which policies are more significant for immigrants' organization and mobilization, (1) the policies of the Mexican state toward their expatriates or (2) the policies adopted by the American government? I have found that there is no direct answer to these questions. Mexican American politics differ significantly across American cities (as my four city study has shown) and over time. Although the Mexican government has played an important role in the mobilization and organization of Mexican expatriates, this is true only in the last two decades and in the absence of formal policies in the United States to incorporate immigrants. Political developments in the host country, however, also have the capacity to mobilize newcomers and engage them into the political life of their place of residence as the 2006 rallies in different American cities to oppose a House bill (H.R.4437) that criminalized undocumented immigrants and those who give them aid have shown. What are the major factors, then, that account for the dynamics of Mexican immigrants' political behavior and their propensity to orient themselves to the Mexican and/or American political systems?

Answers to the above empirical questions are relevant to a number of thorny normative issues as well. Is there evidence that Mexican immigrants and their offspring are gradually integrating into the US political system both nationally and locally or are they maintaining or invigorating their attachment to Mexico? Are Mexican Americans

developing divided or dual loyalties and does this threaten to undermine their role as American citizens? I seek to shed light on these questions by briefly summarizing the key findings of this study and then considering their implications for the future of Mexican American politics.

7.1 Outlook on the Evolution of Immigrant Politics and Incorporation in Four American Cities and the United States

The political incorporation of Mexicans in the United States has not followed a straightforward path. The roads they have taken have clearly been influenced by the opportunity structures they have faced in their places of residence. These include the political development and institutional arrangements of each locality which have created a variety of incentives and constraints for the participation of newcomers, as well as for the creation of political alliances (Browning, et al. 1990c). Homeland institutions that intervene in the places immigrants live, such as consulates and state of origin authorities can also be considered part of the opportunity structure because they affect the ways immigrants mobilize and organize as well as the qualities of their organizations.

Of the four cities considered in this study, it is in Los Angeles that Mexicans have had the most success incorporating, not only because of their numbers but also because limited avenues towards accommodation with the local political system created greater incentives for minorities to participate and seek out political allies. Antonio Villaraigosa's triumph was possible because he was able to build a coalition of Latinos, African Americans and liberal non-Hispanic whites. His successful quest for the city's mayoral office in 2005 confirmed the political relevance that Latinos have acquired in this metropolis after more than a decade of naturalizations and greater electoral

participation was spurred in great part by the many initiatives and policies against immigrants introduced in California during the 1990s (Barreto and Woods 2005). Since the Latino population of the city is predominantly of Mexican origin, Villarraigosa's victory represents an important milestone in the incorporation process of the community.

Because the political system of Chicago evolved in a context in which greater collaboration among ethnic groups was necessary, it seems plausible that this city is better placed to incorporate its large Mexican population than a reform city like Los Angeles. Yet the incorporation of Mexicans in Chicago has occurred at a slower pace. Chicago's power structure was more open to accommodating Mexicans, making the political stakes lower than in Los Angeles; for this reason minorities have had a hard time building coalitions that can defeat the long-standing political machine within the Democratic Party. Except for a brief moment in the 1980s, ethnic and racial groups have been divided and unable to overcome their differences. These divisions create problems for the incorporation of new and disadvantaged immigrant groups such as Mexicans because their successful integration is linked to the capacities of ethnic and racial minorities to challenge and transform the local power structure. A major disadvantage for first-generation Mexicans in Chicago is that Mexican-Americans, to whom they are unavoidably linked, have not been able to articulate a political agenda independent of the machine. Thus, although the number of elected Hispanic officials has grown in the last few decades, this group has not been able to overcome the substantive political inequality that keeps reproducing its conditions of economic and social disadvantage.

Like Los Angeles, Dallas is a reform city. However, minority integration there has been very difficult because of an institutional structure designed by narrow and well-

organized conservative business elites that effectively blocked newcomers' entrance to the system until the 1970s. Litigation in the federal courts turned out to be the only alternative by which excluded groups could open up the political process. Although various changes to the city's political system, such as the adoption of district elections, have enlarged the political representation of African-Americans and Latinos, minority political participation is still low (Morgan 2004). On the one hand, the anti-politics and anti-government environment of the city creates few incentives for Mexican immigrants to participate in what local political life there is and, on the other, they have not been the direct targets of anti-immigrant initiatives that in Los Angeles increased the political awareness of local leaders and mobilized the community. For this reason, Mexican leaders do not show the same levels of political consciousness that they have shown in California and to a lesser extent in Chicago. For instance, Mexican leaders are more suspicious of partisan politics regardless of their orientation towards Mexico or the United States than in the other cities I studied.

Although the peculiar characteristics of the Mexican community (including the scale and timing of migrations but also the predominant places of origin) affect their integration path in all the cities, they seem most relevant for explaining the difficulties Mexicans face in New York City. Although the Mexican population has been growing steadily since the mid 1980s, Mexicans are not the largest immigrant group and the presence of so many immigrants from other places diffuses the political effect that their numbers by themselves may be having in other cities. Furthermore, while in the other cities the places of origin of Mexican immigrants are varied, Mexicans in New York come predominantly from the Mixteca Baja, a poor indigenous region historically

neglected by the Mexican government. People from this area, thus, possess even less human and social capital than Mexicans coming from more developed regions. Because of these reasons and because they do not represent the most important immigrant group to the region, class and ethnic variables seem to be more relevant in accounting for their incorporation experience in this locality than in the others I studied.

The institutional context of the city, nonetheless, is also unfavorable for their incorporation. Although New York's political system is often deemed more capable of incorporating the new immigrant waves that arrived in the United States after 1965 than other cities (Mollenkopf 1999; Mollenkopf, et al. 2001), minority incorporation has been much slower than expected as points of entrance into the system which grant some but not full representation diminish the incentives to assemble minority coalitions.

To sum up, the institutional framework Mexicans face in the cities where they have arrived seems to be most important in shaping their political behavior, although the characteristics of the immigrant community and of migration flows also play an important role, particularly in cases in which these characteristics depart from the norm.

7.2 The role of the Sending State in Shaping Immigrant Political Behavior

The data I presented showed that a new policy of rapprochement with emigrants implemented by the Mexican government and the country's more general democratization have been the most important factors stimulating the flourishing of organizations for first-generation immigrants in the four cities. In a few cases, host state-generated conflict also contributed to the emergence of these organizations. This casts doubt, therefore, on the transnational literature that attributes the emergence of these organizations to technological developments or cultural factors and plays down the role

of state institutions. Although immigrants have historically established hometown associations, the proliferation among Mexican immigrants of this type of organization and of state federations in recent decades cannot be explained without considering the role of state institutions and institutional actors. Homeland policies towards mobilizing and organizing immigrants also explain convergence in the types of organizations Mexicans have established since the 1990s. The effectiveness of these policies, however, has varied from city to city. In Los Angeles and Chicago, for example, Mexican consulates and state of origin authorities have played a more active role in organizing the Mexican community than in Dallas or New York. This explains why, organizations based on the state of origin are more prominent in the first two cities, although in the case of New York the fact that most Mexican immigrants come from a single state also explains why state federations have not proliferated there.

The different characteristics and attitudes that Mexican groups and their leaders display in each city also demonstrate, nonetheless, the relevance of local opportunity structures to immigrants' political behavior. Leaders of state federations in Los Angeles, for example, have tended to show greater interest in US politics than the leaders of similar organizations in other cities because they have been exposed to a more hostile political environment and, more recently, because their growing interactions with local authorities have opened up more spaces for their participation. In Dallas, in contrast, the non-partisan and non-political stances of most leaders reflect an institutional environment that privileges individual actions over political ones for the solution of daily problems.

By analyzing the opportunity structures in different American cities, then, I have been able to explain why Mexicans have made more progress in some than in others. In addition, I was able to explain variations in the political attitudes of their leaders.

7.3 The Role of National Institutional Structures

The political incorporation of immigrants, however, is not only determined at the local level. Because citizenship and immigration policies are the prerogatives of the national government, national institutional structures are central to the possibilities for immigrants' collective action and strategic choices (interest group or electoral). Political incorporation can take various forms and degrees. A full process of incorporation ideally supposes that immigrants have substantive influence or control over the policy process on those issues that are particularly relevant for them (Browning, et al. 1990b). Having citizenship rights in the host country obviously increases the prospects for immigrants to have a meaningful influence in the political system. With citizenship rights, they can choose to influence policy from the inside by following an electoral strategy or from the outside acting as an interest group. Without citizenship rights, lower levels of incorporation can still occur when immigrants participate in rallies and demonstrations. If there is not at least partial incorporation they become a potential source of social and political conflict.

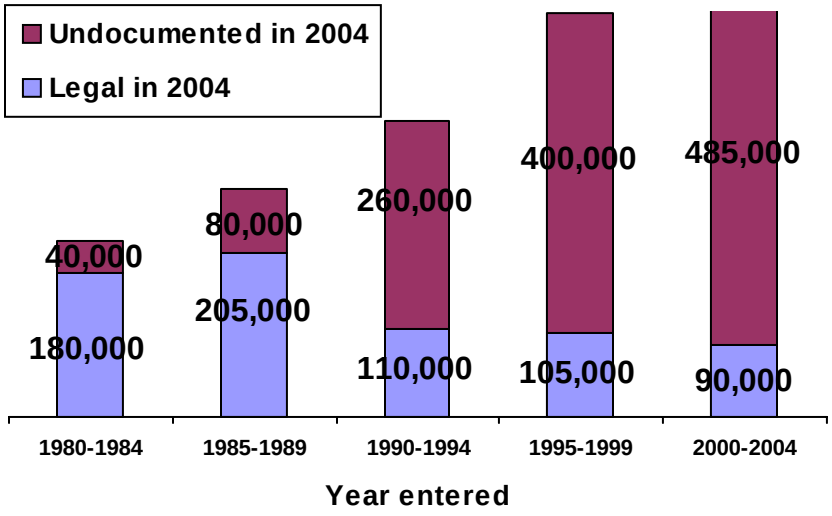
During the first three quarters of the twentieth century Mexican immigrants were a highly vulnerable group, hardly incorporated at all. On the one hand, the majority lacked access to citizenship so that an electoral strategy was not feasible; on the other, their status as sojourners diminished the chances that they would be able to mobilize the resources to organize to influence policy from the outside as an interest group. As Fuchs

(1990) argues, they were locked into the system of "sojourner pluralism". This situation changed in the last quarter of the century as a result of the expansive immigration policies adopted by the United States since 1965. The 1986 amnesty, in conjunction with the family reunification procedures already existent, granted a large number the right to pose claims in the polity and opened up new opportunities for their participation.

Despite this fact, there are still many institutional constraints that may impede the possibilities of a fuller incorporation. At the discursive level, there is still strong disagreement about their capacity to incorporate and its desirability. On the one hand, some scholars have praised the extent to which Mexicans have absorbed the values of the American "civic culture" (Fuchs 1990; Shain 1999). On the other hand, Mexicans are frequently depicted as a threat to America's cultural and political integrity (Renshon 2001; Huntington 2004b; Huntington 2004a) precisely because they are deemed as incapable of adapting to the "American creed".

Although political parties, unions, and other gatekeeper institutions as well as administrative authorities have intensified their interactions with the Mexican community in the United States, a large number of Mexicans remain without legal status. For instance, the single most important obstacle this community confronts in becoming fully participant democratic actors is the fact that many of its members do not have access to citizenship. Although Mexicans have been the dominant group coming to the United States in the last two decades, only a relatively few of them have been able to do it legally. As can be seen in Figure 7.1 the number of Mexicans immigrants who are entering legally has been decreasing while the number of undocumented immigrants has significantly increased.

Figure 7.1: Average Annual Flows of Mexican-Born Migrants in the United States by Legal Status in 2004 and Date of Arrival (Passel 2005)



The illegality of a large portion of Mexicans in the United States (from the estimated 10.3 million persons born in Mexico who now live in the United States about 6.5 million do not have legal documents (Census 2006; Passel 2006)) increases the marginality of this community and makes their assimilation and adaptation into the American society more difficult. At the same time, this marginality feeds perceptions that Mexicans are incapable of assimilating into the American creed. The illegality which scholars like Huntington (2004a) identify as an obstacle to Mexican incorporation could be solved if American immigration policies recognized the reality that a large proportion of immigrants do and should come from Mexico for both historical and geographical reasons[127]. Instead, in recent decades, conservative interests in the immigration debate– which are also the ones most concerned about the viability of assimilation--have pushed

[127] This is recognized to some extent, nonetheless, in the bill that passed the Senate on May 25th, 2006 and in President Bush's proposals in 2001, 2004 and 2006.

for enforcement measures that have failed to deter immigration but have transformed the historically circular patterns of Mexican migration to the United States into permanent settlement. At the same time they shove migrants deeply into the shadows of American society[128].

If the illegality problem were successfully addressed, other issues that Huntington (2004a) identifies as problematic for the assimilation of Mexicans would also be resolved. Regional concentration, which he sees as threatening, for example, would probably diminish as immigrants would be more likely to disperse within their host country, once they were legal. By dispersing, they also would be encouraged to learn English.

In sum, institutional actions may ameliorate many of the obstacles impeding the assimilation of Mexicans into the "American creed", assuming, for the sake of argument, that they do not already imbibe many of the values of that creed as described by Huntington (Christianity, religious commitment, and work ethic). Institutional actions, furthermore, can also increase the stakes Mexicans perceive in the host country, accelerating the incorporation process.

7.4 Incorporating in the Home Country

As Brubaker (Brubaker 2005) has pointed out, the notion of diaspora is often characterized in substantialist terms. However, not all members of national groups residing outside their places of origin engage in diasporic politics. Rather than talking

[128]In a testimony to the US Congress Douglas Massey who has studied the immigration phenomenon for decades concluded the following:

> In sum, the American attempt to stop the flow of Mexican workers within a rapidly integrating North American economy has reduced the rate of apprehension at the border, raised the rate of death among migrants, produced longer trip lengths, lowered rates of return migration, increased the pace of undocumented population growth, and transformed what had been a circular flow of workers affecting three states into a settled population of families scattered throughout 50 states, all at the cost of billions of taxpayer dollars (Massey 2005).

about diasporas as an entity, we should talk about them as a stance. At the same time, we should distinguish between an actively diasporan fraction and the majority who adopt no political positions towards their homeland. In the case of Mexicans residing in the United States, it is probable that the majority are not interested in mobilizing towards their country of origin. After all, if emigration is a political act, it is the act of defecting from a system rather than of attempting to change it (Hirschman 1970). Those who defect, or leave, have already made the individual choice of not being politically active in their homeland. Most emigrants are more interested in economic improvement than in political change. It is logical, therefore, to expect most emigrants "to display low levels of efficacy and loyalty, and thus low levels of political activity" (Ireland 1994) at least towards their homeland. As has been made clear in this work, Mexican expatriates did not engage in diasporic politics until recently.

The process of democratization in Mexico, its new policy of rapprochement towards those residing abroad, as well as changes in its citizenship and nationality laws have gradually opened up new spaces for the participation of expatriates in its political life. In this context, some activist groups within the Mexican diaspora –the "Diaspora" diaspora (Brubaker 2005)-- followed an interest group strategy to push for even greater levels of incorporation, namely the right to vote from abroad and be elected to political office. As part of this strategy, Mexican émigrés have lobbied Mexican authorities with different levels of intensity and effectiveness since the early 1990s. Except for a few sectors within the opposition–particularly within the PRD--the Mexican political class generally opposed expanding political rights to those residing abroad because the costs of

doing so were perceived as both too high and unnecessary[129]. However, as political competition increased among Mexico's three major political parties, and as emigrant influence over the country's economic and political life increased, this consensus started to break down. The result was the 2005 law to allow expatriate voting. For all its limitations, which reflect lingering concerns among the political class over the consequences of giving expatriates voting rights, passage of the law was an event of historic proportions in Mexico's political development whose full effects will unfold only in years to come.

What does this new level of incorporation imply for Mexico? What will be the real levels of participation of Mexicans abroad in their country's political life? There are signs that the interest of the expatriate community as a whole to get involved in Mexico's politics was overestimated –e.g. of an estimated universe of 4 million potential voters, only 56, 749 persons registered to participate in the 2006 election. But it is too early to know if participation rates may eventually rise. Meanwhile, it is important to remember that the participation of Mexicans in homeland politics is not limited to the electoral process: through the organizations they have created in the United States many more than those registered to vote are already exercising their voice.

7.5 Empirical and Theoretical Considerations and Implications

Over the last few decades, social scientists have attempted to document the rapid demographic and social changes that the relentless process of Mexican migration to the United States has implied. Besides studying migration networks and the economic variables that motivate people to migrate, international migration scholars are now also

[129] In addition, members of the PRI, which until 2000 dominated Mexico's political life, were against expanding political rights to those residing abroad because they feared if they were allowed to vote they would vote against the government.

documenting the dynamics and consequences of the settlement process of Mexican immigrants in major American cities as well as in new destination areas. Sociologists and anthropologists seek to explain adaptation and assimilation and the ways immigrants are transforming the communities where they settle. Scholars studying transnationalism from various disciplines have focused on identifying the different cultural, social, economic and political links that immigrants have established with their places of origin and to analyze the hybrid or fluid identities that immigrants acquire by their simultaneous presence in two places (Appadurai 1996; Portes 1997a; Smith and Guranizo 1998; Smith 1998b; Moctezuma Longoria 1999; Smith 1999b). Political scientists, in contrast, have produced far less work on this phenomenon[130]. Even though Mexicans are today the largest immigrant group to the United States, few analysts have developed frameworks to study their political behavior, or to compare their political incorporation to that of previous immigrant groups. In general, studies of their political attitudes collapse first-generation Mexican immigrants into wider categories such as Mexican-American, Hispanics or Latinos and treat them as a broadly similar ethnic group. Few differentiations are made between old and new populations or between citizens and non-citizens[131]. The limited study in the United States of the political behavior of post-1965 immigrants—and particularly of Mexicans-- contrasts sharply with the case of Europe, where scholars have produced a large body of literature about the characteristics and patterns of incorporation of the predominant immigrant groups in the continent (Ireland 1994; Bousetta 2000; Ireland 2000; Koopmans and Statham 2000a; Koopmans and

[130] There are some exceptions: For example Smith (1998a) who nonetheless has tended to use more sociological and anthropological perspectives, (Desipio, et al. 2003), (Itzigsohn 2000).
[131] An interesting study that does this differentiation is that by Jones-Correa (1998b), although he does not focus on the Mexican case.

Statham 2000b; Ireland 2003; Jacobs, et al. 2004; Jacobs and Tillie 2004; Koopmans 2004).

To fill this gap this study has explored the process of political incorporation of Mexican immigrants in both the United States and Mexico through the examination of the origins, dynamics and patterns of action of first-generation Mexican-American organizations in the United States. Political incorporation in the host society has traditionally implied that immigrants relinquish their political interests in their country of origin. As was demonstrated here, contemporary migration suggests a different dynamic. Greater contacts with the homeland thanks to technological developments, along with sending country efforts to engage and mobilize their expatriates, have diminished the incentives for immigrants to abandon their political claims on their homeland. Because immigrant political incorporation is often tightly linked to and influenced by incorporation or reincorporation into the homeland, I have argued that the two processes should be studied together. In this final section, I turn to several larger questions about the effects of the simultaneous incorporation of Mexicans on the future of the United States.

7.5.1 Mexicans in the United States: A Dual Loyalty?

How will the American democracy deal with a large population group, more than half of which resides in the United States without a legal status, that historically has not been perceived as fit to belong to the polity? What space do Mexican immigrants and their offspring have in the USA? Will they remain as second-class people or will they become participatory and concerned citizens? Will they have dual loyalties?

The analysis presented here directly challenges those who portray Mexican immigration as a threat to America's national unity and question their capacity to assimilate into a static "American creed" (Renshon 2001; Huntington 2004b; Huntington 2004a)[132]. I should clarify that in this work I have explicitly chosen to talk about incorporation rather than assimilation. As Plotke has explained, assimilation suggests "less conflict and disagreement than is common in political entry—to be assimilated (…) in a polity seems almost to be absorbed in it" (Plotke 1999, p. 298). Incorporation, in contrast

> indicates both inclusion and the formation of the group that is being incorporated. To say that a group has been incorporated into a polity signals the formation of that group as a new and distinctive part of the polity. This implies change in the polity, and the possibility of conflict between the new group and other political agents (Plotke 1999).

If Mexicans are expected to assimilate without any major problem into a pre-1960s [133] non-inclusive creed derived from the Anglo-Protestant culture that Huntington idealizes, then he may have some reason to be concerned. Mexicans may not be able to do so first because they may not be accepted into a creed from which they were historically excluded. As Waldinger (2004) suggests, today's newcomers have encountered a society transformed by the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and 1970s which has expanded the notion of what it is to be American. For this reason, by becoming

[132] The work of Tichenor and Smith had already shown that taking about one and unified American creed is problematic because historically there have been competing traditions about America's national idea. As a result here I prefer to discuss the viability of their incorporation into the American political system, which includes their participation and representation in America's political institutions as well as their capacity to influence the policy process.

[133] Huntington argues that this creed started to be eroded since the 1960s by "sub-national, dual national and transnational identities" (Huntington 2004b, p. XV).

part of this nation, they will certainly remake it in ways more fundamental than previous immigrant groups ever imagined. A better question is whether they will be able to successfully incorporate into the American polity.

Following Huntington's line of argument the answer would be "probably not" because Mexican immigration displays special characteristics that make it different from previous flows and that might impede their political integration. These include, apart from their illegality discussed before, the contiguity of the homeland, its persistence, and the poor human and social capital resources of most immigrants in a period when the United States economy is more skill-based. However, it is important to consider that they also have many characteristics of previous immigrant groups, such as a culture of hard work and a desire to make it in the United States[134]. Even if many of them live segregated in ethnic enclaves and speak little English, this was the common experience of previous immigrant influxes. Cultural and linguistic assimilation came not with the first generation but with the second and there are no reasons to suppose that the children of Mexican immigrants do not want to assimilate. Data produced by The *Harvard Immigration Project* and presented by Suárez Orozco shows that the children of new immigrants not only value learning English but are more likely to agree with the statement "in life school is the most important thing" (Suárez-Orozco 2004). A very different concern, which will not be discussed here, is whether their children will be able to make it in America or become part of an under class (Portes and Zhou 1993).

[134] As Gregory Rodriguez has explained, although Chicano political activists have tended to portray Mexican-Americans as a conquered people, highlighting their ancestral rights to the Southwest. they also have tended to present Mexican migration as a process determined by economic forces over which migrants have little or no control. However, millions of Mexicans that have come to the United States did so voluntarily, hoping that one day they would be able to lift their families into the middle class(Rodriguez 2004).

Although their group characteristics may make their adaptation more difficult, the main obstacles to their political incorporation are not individual but institutional[135]. Mexican immigrants have faced an opportunity structure at the national, state and local levels that has tended to constrain rather than to encourage their incorporation. Although some important policy decisions have facilitated their entrance into the American polity, most importantly the 1986 amnesty, many other institutional obstacles actually block their successful integration.

To a great extent, therefore, the degree of their incorporation will be determined by the spaces made available for their political participation and representation. As this work has shown, Mexican immigrants' political behavior since the 1990s has focused predominantly on the homeland, not only because of the obvious attachments they retain with their country of origin, but because in the last two decades and a half they have enjoyed a more receptive posture from the Mexican government than from that of the United States.

What about the issue of loyalty? As this work has demonstrated, Mexicans are becoming political actors both in Mexico and the United States and they are certainly, and unavoidably, developing dual loyalties. This phenomenon, however, is not uncommon for other immigrant and ethnic groups in the present or in the past (Morawska 2001). The main question is whether having two loyalties will impede their successful

[135] As Parrillo (2005) explains with great clarity, almost every immigrant group, including those that are considered now fully assimilated, has been the victim of racial, religious or cultural bias. Although new immigrants are perceived as too different from the American mainstream, so were perceived other immigrant groups in the past that ended up, nonetheless, successfully assimilating in the United States. In the same vein, there is no compelling reason to believe that new immigrants will not integrate in this country, as previous immigrants did, after various generations. Nonetheless, they will certainly enrich and expand the concept of "mainstream America."

incorporation into their host society by detracting from their commitment to the American system.

At first glance, it seems that immigrant focus on the homeland would deter the focus on their host country. However, their interest in their country of origin is not necessarily a zero-sum game. Mobilization towards the homeland can also be seen in a positive light. First, not all Mexicans in the United States are focusing on their homeland, but only a relatively small group that has become actively involved in advancing an agenda there, mostly those that participate in organizations such as the ones identified for this study. Second, why are they focusing on Mexico? Obviously, as in the case of many other immigrant groups, the myth of return is common among Mexicans in the United States. Many immigrants, for example, build houses in Mexico which they dream they will one day occupy. The reality is that many sending towns are semi-deserted places with beautiful empty houses, because those who built them have already settled for good in the United States.

More than that, what seems to guide the active Mexican diaspora is a collective commitment to help in the improvement and prosperity of their homeland (Brubaker 2005). Although the Mexican government is behind the emergence of many hometown associations and state federations, these organizations would not have been as successful as many of them are if their members had not been committed to the idea of improving the material circumstances of their places of origin. As the data presented here showed, the main and so far most successful activity of these organizations has been to raise money to invest in infrastructure and social projects in sending regions. By doing so, emigrants are actively participating in what should be one of the main policies followed

by Mexico and the United States to deter emigration to the North: to invest vast resources in emigrant emitting places to expand opportunities of their inhabitants have fewer incentives to leave.

Even political organizations that have demanded political rights in Mexico have as an underlying idea to support policies that affect emigrants. In this regard, these organizations are attempting to bring better solutions to bear on the problem of Mexican migration to the United States. It is interesting to notice, for instance, that the CDPME, which was active in the campaign to obtain the right to vote from abroad, has since March 2006 shifted its attention to the United States by joining the debate on immigration reform.

Third, many first-generation Mexican organizations, particularly home town associations and state federations, reproduce important American political values in their internal processes such as democracy and accountability and have also exported those values to their places of origin (Shain 1999; Leiken 2000). When they participate in the development of infrastructure projects in their hometowns, for example, these organizations make sure that local authorities do not take bribes by naming local committees to follow up on the use of the resources they send. This shows the extent to which immigrants have assimilated important values of the "American civic culture" (Fuchs 1990).

In sum, although participation in first-generation Mexican organizations may help reinvigorate immigrants' loyalty to their homeland, this does not seem to constitute a problem for the United States and does not raise questions about immigrants' loyalty to their adopted country. On the contrary, these organizations are being helpful in creating

new bridges between Mexico and the United States and in finding innovative solutions to the problem of illegal immigration.

At the same time, these associations bring important benefits for the adaptation and incorporation of Mexicans into the United States. By participating in them immigrants increase their social capital which in turn augments their feelings of political trust and participation (Jacobs and Tillie 2004). By becoming politically active towards their homeland they also gain political experience that they can use to participate in the political life of their host country as well. There are, for instance, clear signs that these organizations and their leaders are gradually turning their attention to their host society. Apart from the support that state federations have provided to local politicians in the last few years, an interesting political development that I captured at the end of my research is the active participation of these organizations in the 2005 political campaign of Antonio Villaraigosa for mayor of Los Angeles and in the 2006 pro-immigrant rallies. Furthermore, some state federation leaders in Los Angeles and Chicago are now engaged in creating broader organizations to advance immigrants' rights in the United States.

Finally, although the leaders of these organizations privileged a Mexican identity they did not see this identity as being inconsistent with also thinking of themselves as Americans but rather as setting themselves apart from Mexican-Americans. Their main complaint about a Mexican-American identity is that they identified Mexican-Americans as being ashamed of their Mexican heritage, while they felt proud of it. This may point to a different strategy towards their political incorporation in the United States from the one historically adopted by Mexican-Americans. While Mexican-Americans have always attempted to demonstrate that their loyalty belongs exclusively to the United States, post-

IRCA Mexican immigrants recognize and assume as unproblematic the possibility of having a dual identity and loyalty. Their loyalty to Mexico, however, does not question their loyalty to the United States a country for which they show high levels of admiration and respect. It is also interesting to notice that none of these organizations have a separatist agenda or have shown an interest in asserting a historical claim to the American territory, an element that Huntington (Huntington 2004a; Huntington 2004b) identified as possibly impeding their successful assimilation into the American creed.

To sum up, these organizations have the potential of playing an important role in motivating the political incorporation of Mexican immigrants into the American political system. For this reason, I believe that American policy makers in different cities should design programs focused on reaching out to Mexican organizations such as those identified in my research. So far, these organizations have had far fewer contacts with American authorities and politicians than with those from Mexico. A wider contact with these organizations on the part of American authorities and institutions will help channel their efforts and activities not only in benefit of the home country, but also towards the host.

I also think that Latino organizations need to work more energetically to reach out to the newly organized Mexican community. Mexican immigrants, after all, represent an important grass-roots base for them. The growing number of these organizations and their capacity to influence the political attitudes of first and second-generation Mexican immigrants make it unwise to ignore them if Mexican Americans want to increase their political clout in American cities.

7.5.2 Political Opportunity Structures and Trasnationalism

This study has suggested that it is useful to understand how opportunity structures affect immigrant political behavior and participation towards their home and host societies. Because many immigrant groups that arrived since 1965 have maintained or increased their ties with their homeland, many studies on the subject have been conducted by using a transnational approach. Since these studies focus on the individual variables rather than institutional ones (Portes 1997a; Portes, et al. 1999), they have missed the relevance of home and host state opportunity structures in affecting immigrants' political behavior, or have treated them predominantly as intervening variables.

To a great extent, transnational scholarship was a reaction to studies of immigrant assimilation that considered integration in the host society as a zero-sum game. Assimilation implied absorption of host society values and the abandonment of those brought from the homeland. Studies conducted using a transnational approach suggested otherwise: immigrants' identities were not static but fluid and hybrid.

These studies also represented a reaction to structural theories in international migration that were not able to explain why immigrants that appeared to be the victims of overwhelming structural forces where able to develop special links with their communities of origin that liberated them from their condition of subordination (Portes 1997b).

In a somewhat celebratory mood, some scholars have stressed that state boundaries are being eroded or crossed--hence the use of the notion *trans* (referring to boundaries being crossed) rather than *inter* (referring to boundaries being maintained and negotiated) (Albrow 1998). However, they left aside the fact that states still have great

capacities to determine migrants' activities and identities by defining who belongs and who cannot belong to the polity.

In a way, these studies were able to describe how immigrants have increased their ties with their countries of origin but not why. This study has attempted to fill this gap by showing that in the last few decades immigrants have mobilized and organized towards their country of origin because the opportunity structure changed in positive directions. However, they also have the potential of mobilizing towards the host society as opportunities for their mobilization increase and they learn to navigate their new polity.

At the same time, it has brought back to the forefront of the debate the notion of political incorporation. Although the notion of assimilation may be questionable, studying immigrant incorporation is still important. In the end, what matters the most is not so much whether immigrants' identities are being transformed by interacting in two social settings, although this is still an interesting matter, but what are their chances of incorporating in their host societies. Only through their political incorporation will immigrant groups such as Mexican that arrive with limited resources be able to overcome their conditions of poverty and disadvantage.

7.6 A Final Note

While I was in the last stages of writing this study, in early 2006, immigrants all over the United States, many of them Hispanic, marched in the streets to oppose the Sensenbrenner bill that attempted to criminalize immigrants without documents and the people who work with them. These unprecedented marches were a watershed event in the history of immigrants to the United States. Never before had they launched protests of such magnitude and in so many American cities. Preliminary data of a study conducted

by the Institute for Latino Studies at University of Notre Dame showed that between February and the first of May 2006 there were 259 protests and student walk-outs in 43 states and 158 American cities and the total number of people that participated in those rallies was between 3,324,256 and 5,058,806[136].

Mexicans are the largest immigrant group in the United States and they were the largest group participating in many of the marches, as reflected in the numerous Mexican flags that protesters were waving. In contrast to the march that took place in Los Angeles in October 1994 against proposition 187 in which participants carried mostly Mexican flags, many of the protesters displayed American flags as well. By doing so, they made the explicit statement that they cherished the USA and wanted to be Americans even if they also maintained a strong connection with their countries of origin. Many of the immigrant organizations I included in this study actively participated in the recent demonstrations and many of their leaders were involved in their organization, even though the rallies themselves reflected not so much a calculated strategy as a spontaneous reaction to the bill (H. R. 4437). The active involvement of many of these organizations and their leaders reinforces my argument that these associations have the capacity of advancing the political interests of immigrants and Hispanics in the United States even though most of them were originally focused on the homeland.

Some commentators have likened the recent immigrant political activism to earlier social movements such as that for civil rights in the 1960s and 1970s. Is this accurate? Can such a movement be successful? Finally, how would a political opportunity structure approach such as the one applied here explain such developments?

[136] Preliminary data presented by Bada, Xochitl, in an email discussion group on May 11, 2006

Although it is too early to answer these questions definitively, there are certainly some aspects that can be tentatively analyzed. The first issue is determining when a social group that has traditionally made few contentious claims on the political system start to do so. At a minimum for mobilization to take place there must be not only a feeling of grievance but also the faith that by acting collectively they can achieve redress (McAdam, et al. 2001). In the case of the recent rallies, what mobilized immigrants more than anything was a strong feeling of grievance provoked by the radical legislative proposals coming out of Washington. Although there were other anti-immigrant bills or policies before, none had been so extreme in content or potential consequences. The possibility that such a bill might become law mobilized not only immigrants but also important potential allies and supporters such as the Catholic Church, employers facing obstacles to cheap labor, and local and national unions that have flirted in recent years with unionizing undocumented workers.

The Sensenbrenner bill thus contributed to increasing the resource mobilization capacities of immigrants and the emergence of what could be considered a nascent social movement. This factor by itself, however, was not sufficient for their mobilization. An antecedent was the 1986 immigration amnesty. As I have argued, it gave a stake in the polity to a large group of Mexican immigrants that previously had not been considered potential members of the American polity. IRCA was approved not as a response to immigrant political pressure, although certainly pro-immigration groups lobbied for the amnesty, but because of an attempt by the American political class to find a solution to the illegal immigration problem. The amnesty was, for instance, only a part of a more comprehensive immigration reform, which also attempted to increase the security of the

border and to control immigration influxes by penalizing employers, although this last feature has not been strictly enforced. When the amnesty was implemented, however, its impacts were enormous because it helped consolidate Mexican migration networks and at the same time became a reference point for future generations of undocumented immigrants.

In 2006, immigrants marched in the streets because they assumed that there was a political solution to their problem: another amnesty was possible if they were able to mobilize sufficient political leverage to advance their collective interests. Because voting was not an option to a large number of them, they attempted to exercise pressure on the system from the outside by demonstrating and by organizing an economic boycott on May 1st.

The opportunity structure was more receptive than it had been in previous decades because the influence of Hispanics in the political process is on the rise. For this reason, various initiatives contemplating some form of regularization or path to citizenship were being discussed in Congress—e.g. the Kennedy and McCain Bill in the Senate--while President Bush had already called two times–in 2001 and in 2004--for a comprehensive solution to the immigration problem. The receptiveness of the political system was also reflected at the local level. For example, the mayors of both Chicago and Los Angeles not only supported the immigrants' cause but actually participated in their rallies.

Using the four categories I developed in this study--national cleavage structures, institutional actors and legal arrangements, political culture and idioms and contingencies of time and place--what are the chances of success for this nascent social movement? As the bill approved in the House in December 2005 suggests, there is strong ideological

opposition within some sectors of American society to accepting new immigrants, and particularly low-skilled Mexicans, as members of the polity. In 1986, in a context in which the effects of the civil rights movement were still being felt, the political climate was favorable to inclusive solutions. A guest worker program was not even considered at the time because it was evident that the previous programs had not worked and if the United States wanted to avoid acquiring the characteristics of a sultanistic Arab emirate it needed to grant newcomers a real stake in the polity. In 2006, in a very different context, it has become difficult to pass any immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship, particularly when there is the generalized perception within the American public that the 1986 was a failure. Institutionally, immigrants have a more limited capacity to influence the system than those that are opposed to their presence in this country, because of their lack of legal rights. To increase their political leverage they will certainly need not only to become better organized, but also have the continuous support of strong allies. As the immigration raids in May 2006 showed, there are still many mechanisms by which a pro-immigrant social movement may be controlled and dismantled. The simple but rigorous enforcement of existing immigration law (employer sanctions and deportation and removal) might have a chilling effect on immigrant political activities or it might spark massive protests.

The immigrants' cause is aided by the instability of the current political alignment in the United States and the fact that neither political party can afford to lose the political support of the Hispanic community. Many Republican politicians still remember that California became a Democratic bastion in presidential elections after their party wasted

its political capital in that state by supporting anti-immigrant initiatives such as Proposition 187.

In summary, although it is still too early to talk about the existence of a social movement with strength comparable to the civil rights movement, there are hints of a nascent movement. Immigrants today do not enjoy the relatively open political context of the American sixties, which allowed the advancement of the African-American cause. Despite this, it is clear that the immigrant organization and capacity is growing year by year. Time will tell the extent to which the voice of this community will be heard and taken into account in the American political and policy processes.

.

Appendix A

Questionnaire

I. The Organization

1) When was your organization/group started?
2) How did it get started?
3) Was any governmental agency involved in the creation of the group? Or did any governmental agency motivate you to organize?
4) What are the criteria for membership?
5) Are there dues?
6) How many members are there in your organization? Are all of them immigrants, or are some born in the US?
7) How is the leadership selected?
8) When were you selected/elected? For how long were you selected?

II. The organization explicit goals

9) What are the main goals of the organization/group?
10) What are its major activities? What are its regular activities?
11) Does it engage in activities/provide services that attempt to assist the members with concerns in the US such as English classes, citizenship training, becoming a legal resident, establishing a business, getting jobs, getting legal advice?
12) Does it provide services/sponsor activities related to the communities of origin such as fund raising for specific projects, supporting candidates in elections, etc?
13) Which of these types of activities (assist members with concerns in the US or sponsor activities related to the communities of origin) is more important, or are they equally important?
14) Does the Mexican government (at any level) assist or sponsor any of these types of activities (assist members with concerns in the US or sponsor activities related to the communities of origin)? If possible specify (Consulate, state government, municipal government etc).
15) Does the American government (at any level) assist or sponsor any of these types of activities (assist members with concerns in the US or sponsor activities related to the communities of origin)? If possible specify.
16) Does any American NGO (at any level) assist or sponsor any of these types of activities (assist members with concerns in the US or sponsor activities related to the communities of origin)? If possible specify.
17) Have you received help from other organizations/businesses here in the US or in Mexico?
18) Can you identify one or some projects (e.g. the construction of a road etc) developed by your organization in Mexico that you consider successful?
19) Can you identify one or some projects developed by your organization in the United States that you consider successful?

III. Ties to Mexican-Americans

20) Do you identify some of the major Mexican-American or other Hispanic/ Latino Organizations?
21) Does your organization have any ties with Mexican American/Latino groups such as LULAC, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, MALDEF? If so, with what organizations?
22) Do you consider this to be a Mexican organization, or a Mexican American/Hispanic organization?

IV. Perspectives on goals of the members

23) What is more important to you: improve the life conditions of yourself, your family or your community here in the US or in Mexico?
24) Do you consider yourself simply American?
25) Do you consider yourself Mexican-American?
26) Do you consider yourself Mexican?
27) Are you a US citizen?
28) Are you a US resident?
29) Approximately, how many member of your organization have US citizenship/ residence?
30) Do you have dual-nationality?
31) Approximately, how many members of your organization have dual nationality?
32) If you have US-born children? Have you applied for them to become dual-nationals?
33) Are you an active member of your community here in the US (board of education, etc.), if so what has made you participate in your community

V. Political aspects with respect to Mexico.

34) Do you think that Mexicans living abroad should get the right to vote in Mexican elections?
35) Do you think that Mexicans abroad should be represented in the Mexican Congress?
36) Are you engaged in any activities that attempt to promote the right to vote in Mexican elections?
37) Is your organization engaged in any activities that attempt to promote the right to vote in Mexican elections?
38) Does your organization have a regular relationship with Mexican political parties? If so, with what parties?
39) When you think about Mexico, are you more interested in what happens in your community of origin? Or are you more interested in what happens at the national level? Or both?
40) What do you think are the major concerns of Mexicans living abroad with respect to Mexico?

41) Do you think Mexicans living abroad should lobby/pressure the
42) Mexican government to get what they want in Mexico (e.g. the right to vote in Mexican elections, a safer trip to their communities of origin)?
43) Do you think Mexicans living abroad should lobby/pressure the
44) Mexican government to get what they want in the US?
45) What instances in Mexico do you consider more effective to defend your interests with respect to Mexico (e.g. Congress, the executive branch/Foreign Affairs ministry/ a political party?
46) Do you think that the policies of the Mexican government towards its nationals living abroad will change due to the arrival to power of a new political party?
47) Do you think that they will stay the same?

VI. Political aspects with respect to the US.

48) Do you think that a major goal of Mexicans living abroad should be to incorporate themselves into the American society?
49) Which do you think is the best strategy to do so?
50) Do you vote in American elections?
51) Does your organization attempt to promote the political empowerment of Mexicans in the US? If so, in what way?
52) Is your organization committed to promote the vote in American elections?
53) When you think about the US, are you more interested in what happens in the community you live or are you more interested in what happens at the national level, or both?
54) What do you think are the major concerns of Mexicans living abroad with respect to the US?
55) Do you think Mexicans living abroad should lobby/pressure the
56) American government to get what they want in the US?
57) Do you think Mexicans living abroad should lobby/pressure the American government to get what they want in Mexico?

VII. Political aspects with respect to both Mexico and the US

58) In your judgment, do members of your organization consider themselves members of US society? Why?
59) Of Mexican society? Why?
60) Of both Mexican and American society? Why?
61) Do your members identify the Mexican government as their government?
62) The American government as their government?
63) If you identify both (US and Mexico) as your governments to which one do you owe greater allegiance?
64) What is more important for you: (a) to vote and participate in Mexican politics or (b) to vote and participate in American politics.

Appendix B

Demographic Data

Table B.1: Place of origin of Latinos in Chicago Metropolitan

	1990	2000	% Change
All Latinos	836,905 (100%)	1,405,116 (100%)	67.9%
Mexicans	565,737 (67.6 %)	1,052,878 (74.9 %)	86.1%
Puerto Ricans	142,745 (17.1 %)	151,351 (10.8 %)	6.0 %
Cubans	16,624 (2.0 %)	16,891 (1.2 %)	1.6 %
South Americans	25,714 (3.1 %)	37,211 (2.6 %)	44.7 %
Central Americans	15,711 (1.9 %)	36,080 (2.6%)	129.6 %
Other	70,314 (8.5 %)	111,042 (7.9 %)	57.9 %

Source: Paral, Ready et al. (2004)

Table B.2: Change in Mexican Population in Chicago Metropolitan

	1990	2000
Mexican population	565,737	1,052,878
Mexican population as a percentage of total Latino population	67.6 %	74.9%
Mexican population as a percentage of the total population in the Chicago metropolitan area	7.8 %	13.0 %

Table B.3: Place of origin of Latinos in New York

	1990	2000	% Change
All Latinos	1,783,511 (100%)	2,160,554 (100%)	21.1%
Mexicans	61,722 (3.5%)	186,872 (8.6%)	202.8%
Puerto Ricans	896,763 (50.3 %)	789,172 (36.5 %)	-12.0 %
Cubans	56,041 (3.1 %)	41,124 (1.9 %)	-26.6 %
Dominican	332,713 (18.7 %)	406,806 (18.8 %)	22.3 %
South Americans	219,509 (12.3 %)	236,374 (10.9 %)	7.7 %
Central Americans	101,222 (5.7 %)	99,099 (4.6%)	-2.1 %
Other	70,792 (4.0 %)	401,108 (18.6 %)	466.6 %

Source: Census (1990; 2000)

Table B.4: Change in Mexican Population in New York

	1990	2000
Mexican population	61,722	186,872
Mexican population as a percentage of total Latino population	3.5 %	8.6%
Mexican population as a percentage of the total population in New York	0.8 %	2.3 %

Table B.5: Place of origin of Latinos in Los Angeles County

	1990	2000	% Change
All Latinos	3,351,242 (100%)	4,242,213 (100%)	26.6%
Mexicans	2,519,514 (76.2%)	3,041,974 (71.7%)	20.7%
Central or South Americans	548,435 (16.4%)	447,527 (10.5%)	-18.4%
Other	238,167 (11.4 %)	750,977 (17.7 %)	215.3%

Source: Census (2000) and Hayes-Bautista and Nicholges (2000)

Table B.6: Change in Mexican Population in Los Angeles County

	1990	2000
Mexican population	2,519,514	3,041,974
Mexican population as a percentage of total Latino population	76.2%	71.7%
Mexican population as a percentage of the total population in Los Angeles	28.4 %	31.9 %

Table B.7: Place of origin of Latinos in Dallas

	1990	2000	% Change
All Latinos	210,240 (100%)	422,587 (100%)	101.0%
Mexicans	185,096 (88.0%)	350,491 (82.9%)	89.4%
Puerto Ricans	1,497 (0.7%)	2,369 (0.6%)	58.2%
Cubans	1,535 (0.7%)	2,283 (0.5%)	48.7%
Other	22,112 (10.5%)	67,444 (15.9%)	205.0%

Source: Census (1990; 2000)

Table B.8: Change in Mexican Population in Dallas

	1990	2000
Mexican population	185,096	350,491
Mexican population as a percentage of total Latino population	88.0%	82.9%
Mexican population as a percentage of the total population in Dallas	18.4%	29.5%

Bibliography

Albrow, M. (1998). "Frames and Transformations in Transnational Studies." ESRC Transnational Communities Programme Working Paper **02**.

Aleinikoff, A. (2000). Between Principles and Politics: U.S. Citizenship Policy. From Migrants to Citizens. A. Aleinikoff and D. Klusmeyer. Washington, D.C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace**:** 119-171.

Almond, G. and S. Verba (1980). The Civic Culture Revisited. Boston, Little Brown.

Año Nuevo de Kerr, L. (1976). "Chicano Settlements in Chicago: a brief History." Journal of Ethnic Studies **2**(4 (Winter)): 22-32.

Appadurai, A. (1990). "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Culture Economy." Theory, Culture, and Society **7**: 295-310.

Appadurai, A. (1996). Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Bach, R. L. (1992). Settlement Policies in the United States. Nations of Immigrants. G. P. Freeman and J. Jupp. Melbourne, Australia, Oxford University Press.

Barbosa, A. (2001). Vengo a trabajar con ustedes: Juan Hernández. Novedades. Dallas/Forth Worth**:** 1.

Barreto, M. and N. Woods (2005). Latino Voting Behavior in an Anti-Latino Political Context. Diversity in Democracy: Minority Representation in the United States. G. M. Segura and S. Bowler. Charlottesville and London, University of Virginia Press**:** 148-169.

Basch, L., N. Glick Schiller, et al. (1994). Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation States. Langhorne, PA, Gordon and Breach.

Bauböck, R. (2005a). Competing Allegiances and Democratic Inclusion in Migration Contexts. Brussels Conference: the Ties that Bind. Accommodating Complex Diversity in Canada and the European Union, Brussels, Belgium.

Bauböck, R. (2005b). "Expansive Citizenship --Voting beyond Territory and Membership." PSOline(October 2005).

BDM (2006). Ingresos por Remesas Familiares, Información Mensual, Banco de Mexico.

Becerra Ramírez, M. (2000). Nationality in Mexico. From Migrants to Citizens. A. Aleinikoff and D. Klusmeyer. Washington, D.C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace**:** 312-341.

Belenchia, J. (1982). Latinos and Chicago Politics. After Daley, Chicago Politics in Transition. S. K. Gove and L. H. Masotti. Urbana, Chicago, London, University of Illinois Press**:** 118-145.

Berger, M., C. Galonska, et al. (2004). "Political Integration by a Detour? Ethnic Communities and Social Capital of Migrants in Berlin." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **30**(3): 491-508.

Bernstein, N. (2005). Record Immigration Changing New York's Neighborhoods. The New York Times. New York**:** B1 and B3.

Bernstein, N. (2006). In the Streets, Suddenly, An Immigrant Groundswell. The New York Times. New York**:** A14.

Bhabha, H. K. (1990). Dissemination: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation. Nation and Narration. H. K. Bhabha. New York, Routledge.

Bloemrad, I. (2003). Institutions, Ethnic Leaders, and the Political Incorporation of Immigrants: A Comparison of Canada and the United States. Host Societies and the Reception of Immigrants. J. G. Reitz. La Jolla, California, Center For Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California, San Diego.

Borjas, G. (2001). Heaven's Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Bousetta, H. (2000). Immigration, Post-Immigration Politics And The Political Mobilisation Of Ethnic Minorities: A Comparative Case-Study Of Moroccans In Four European Cities. Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, Institute of Political Sociology and Methodology (IPSoM). Brussel, Katholieke Universiteit Brussels.

Broder, J. M. (2005). Latino Victor in Los Angeles Overcomes Division. The New York Times. New York**:** 1A, 22A.

Browning, R. P., D. R. Marshall, et al. (1990a). Has Political Incorporation Been Achieved? Is it Enough? Racial Politics in American Cities. R. P. Browning, D. R. Marshall and D. H. Tabb. New York and London, Longman**:** 212-230.

Browning, R. P., D. R. Marshall, et al. (1990b). Minority Mobilization in Ten Cities: Failures and Successes. Racial Politics in American Cities. R. P. Browning, D. R. Marshall and D. H. Tabb. New York and London, Longman.

Browning, R. P., D. R. Marshall, et al., Eds. (1990c). Racial Politics in American Cities. New York and London, Longman.

Brubaker, R. (1996). Nationalism Reframed , Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Brubaker, R. (2005). "The "Diaspora" Diaspora." Ethnic and Racial Studies **28**(1): 1-19.

Bumiller, E. (2004). Politics at the Border. The New York Times**:** 1, 28A.

Burnham, W. D. (1970). Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics. New York, W. W. Norton.

Calderon Chelius, L. and J. Martinez Saldaña (2002). "Para No Volverse Ausencia": La Construcción de la Identidad Política en el Proceso Migratorio, el Caso Mexicano. La Dimensión Política de la Migración Mexicana. L. Calderon Chelius and J. Martinez Saldaña. México, DF, Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora.

Camarota, S. (2001). Immigration From Mexico, Assessing the Impact on the United States, Center for Immigration Studies.

Cano, A. (2004). El Regreso del Rey del Tomate. La Jornada, Masiosare. Mexico City.

Cano, G. (2001). Orale! Politics: Understanding Political Mobilization Among Immigrants, The Mexican American Communities in Chicago and Houston.

Cardenas, G. (2002). Inusual Apoyo al Voto, Inaceptables, los Cobros por Envio de Dinero, Murat. Exito. Mexico City.

Carpizo, J. (1999). El Voto de los Nacionales Residentes en el Extranjero y el caso de México. Viabilidad del Voto de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero, Memoria de los foros de Tijuana, Baja California y XalapaEnríquez, Veracruz. México, Senado de la República**:** 73-92.

Castles, S. and A. Davidson (2000). Citizenship and Migration. New York, Routledge.

Census (1990). United States 1990 Census, US Census Bureau.

Census (2000). United States 2000 Census, US Census Bureau.

Census (2005). Hispanic Population in the United States 2004 March CPS, US Census Bureau.

Census (2006). Facts for Features - Special Edition: Cinco de Mayo. Washington DC, US Census Bureau.

Center, P. H. (2006). Pew Hispanic Center Survey of Mexicans Living in the U.S. on Absentee Voting in Mexican Elections, Executive Summary, Pew Hispanic Center.

CGMLA (2002). "Diagnóstico del Programa de Comunidades Mexicanas en los Angeles."

Clifford, J. (1994). "Diasporas." Cultural Anthropology **9**(2): 302-38.

Connor, W. (1985). Mexican-Americans in comparative perspective. Washington DC, Urban Institute Press.

Corchado, A. (2000). "Mexican Political Coalition gathers in Dallas today." The Dallas Morning News.

Corchado, A. and R. Sandoval (2001). Migrants question Fox's commitment to them, demand action. The Dallas Morning News. Dallas, Texas.

Cornelius, W. A. and M. E. A. (2003). Y si los Mexicanos Votaran en el 2006? Reforma. Mexico City.

Corwin, A. F. (1978). Mexican Policy and Ambivalence Toward Labor Emigration to the United States. Immigrants--and Immigrants: Perspectives on Mexican Labor Migration to the United States. A. F. Corwin. Westport, Greenwood Press**:** 176-219.

Costain, A. N. (1994). Inviting Women's Rebellion, A political Process Interpretation of the Women's Movement. Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Creuheras, S. (2003). The Poblano Subdiaspora, The view from New York. Mexico in Transition, Harvard University.

Daniels, R. (1990). Coming to America. New York, HarperCollins.

David, H.-B. and F. Guerra (2002). Latino Leadership in Los Angeles: Profiles and Opinions. Los Angeles, UCLA's, CESLAC, and LMU**:** 1-19.

De la Garza, R. O. (1997). Foreign Policy Comes Home: The Domestic Consequences of the Program for Mexican Communities Living in Foreign Countries. Bridging the border : transforming Mexico-U.S. relations. R. O. De la Garza and J. Velasco. Lanham, Md., Rowman & Littlefield.

de la Garza, R. O. and D. Vaughan (1985). The Political Socialization of Chicano Elites: A Generational Approach. The Mexican American Experience: An Interdisciplinary Anthology. R. O. de la Garza, F. D. Bean, C. M. Bonjean, R. Romo and R. Alvarez. Austin, University of Texas Press**:** 241-258.

Desipio, L. (1996). More than the Sum of its Parts: The Building Blocks of Pan-Ethnic Latino Identity. The Politics of Minority Coalitions R. Wilbur. Westport, Connecticut, Praeger**:** 176-189.

Desipio, L., H. Pachon, et al. (2003). Immigrant Politics at Home and Abroad: How Latino Immigrants Engage the Politics of Their Home Communities and the United States, The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute.

Desmond, K. (1999). In the Name of Liberalism: Illiberal Social Policy in the United States and Britain. New York, Oxford University Press.

Domingo, P. (1999). "Rule of Law, Citizenship and Access to Justice in Mexico." Mexican Studies **15**(1): 151-169.

Dresser, D. (1993). Exporting Conflict, Transboundary Consequences of Mexican Politics. The California-Mexico Connection. L. A. E. and K. Burgess. Stanford, California, Stanford University Press**:** 82-112.

Economist (2004). More Mexicans, please. The Economist.

Edgar, J., D. Meissner, et al. (2004). Keeping the Promise: Immigration Proposals from the Heartland, Report of an Independent Task Force. Chicago, The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations.

Editorial, N. Y. T. (2003). New Hope on Immigration. The New York Times**:** 26A.

Edmonston, B. and R. Lee (1996). Local Fiscal Effects of Illegal Immigration: Report of a Workshop, National Research Council.

Ernst, R. (1949). Immigrant Life in New York City 1825-1863. Dallas, Texas, Taylor Publishing Company.

Feldblum, M. (1999). The politics of Nationality Reform and immigration in Contemporary France. Albany, State University of New York.

Fennema, M. (2004). "The Concept and Measurement of Ethnic Community." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **30**(3): 429-448.

Ferman, B. (1996). Challenging the Growth Machine, Neighborhood Politics in Chicago and Pittsburgh. Kansas City, University Press of Kansas.

Fitzgerald (2005). Migration Effects Positive: New Study. Boston, Fitzgerald and Company.

Fitzgerald, D. (2000). Negotiating Extra-Territorial Citizenship, Mexican Migration and the Transnational Politics of Community. La Jolla, Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California, San Diego.

Fix, M., J. S. Passel, et al. (2003). "Trends in Naturalization." Immigrant Families and Workers(3).

Freeman, G. P. and K. Betts (1992). The Politics of Interests and Immigration Policymaking in Australia and the United States. Nations of Immigrants, Australia, the United States, and International Migration. G. P. Freeman and J. Jupp. Melbourne, Australia, Oxford University Press**:** 72-88.

Freeman, G. P., M. T. Hurtado-Ortiz, et al. (2000). Work and Welfare Among Latino Immigrants in California and Texas. Claremont, The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute**:** 11.

Freeman, G. P. and N. Ogelman (1998). "Homeland Citizenship Policies and the Status of Third Country Nationals in the European Union." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **24**(4): 769-788.

Fuchs, L. (1990). The American Kaleidoscope, Race, Ethnicity and the Civic Culture. Hanover and London, Wesleyan University Press.

Geddes, B. (1994). Politician's Dilemma, Building State Capacity in Latin America. Berkley and Los Angeles, University of California.

Glick Schiller, N. (1999). Transmigrants and Nation-States: Something Old and Something New in the U.S. Immigrant Experience. The Handbook on International Migration. C. Hirschman, P. Kasinitz and J. DeWind. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation**:** 94-119.

Goldring, L. Desarrollo, Migradolares y la Participación "Ciudadana" de los Norteños en Zacatecas**:** 94-105.

Goldring, L. (1998a). "The Power of Status in Transnational Social Fields." Coloquio Internacional Sobre Migracion Mexicana a Estados Unidos: 211-223.

Goldring, L., Ed. (1998b). The Power of Status in Transnational Social Fields. Transnationalism from Below. New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction Publishers.

Goldring, L. (2002). "The Mexican State and Transmigrant Organizations: Negotiating the Boundaries of Membership and Participation." Latin American Research Review **37**(3): 55-100.

Goméz Arnau, R. and P. Trigueros (2000). Comunidades Transnacionales e Iniciativas para Fortalecer las Relaciones con las Comunidades Mexicanas en los Estados Unidos. Comisión Nacional de Migración, Mexico City, Mexico.

Gómez, D. (2001). El Programa para las Comunidades Mexicanas en el Extranjero en Chicago, Diagnóstico y Propuestas. Chicago, Illinois.

Gómez Guzmán, R. (2003). Sólo en 93 municipios no hay migración a EU, dice CONAPO. El Heraldo. México DF.

Gomez Mena, C. (2004). Necesario, considerar riesgo a la soberanía por el voto en el extranjero: expertos. La Jornada. Mexico City.

Gonzáles Gutiérrez, C. (1993). The Mexican Diaspora in California. The California-Mexico Connection. A. Lowenthal and K. Burgess. Stanford, California, Stanford University Press**:** 221-238.

Gonzáles Gutiérrez, C. (1995). "La organización de los inmigrantes mexicanos en Los Angeles: la lealtad de los oriundos." Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior **46**(Enero-marzo): 58-97.

Gonzáles Gutiérrez, C. (2003). Las Relaciones de México con su Diáspora: en busca de una política de Estado. En la Fontera del Imperio. R. Fernández de Castro. México City, Ariel.

Gonzáles Gutiérrez, C. and M. E. Schumacher (1998). El Acercamiento de Mexico a las Comunidades Mexicanas en Estados Unidos; el Caso del PCME. México y Estados Unidos; las Rutas de la Cooperación. O. Pellicer and R. Fernández de Castro. México City, SRE-ITAM.

Guarnizo, L. E. (1998). "The Rise of Transnational Social Formations: Mexican and Dominican State Responses to Transnational Migration." Political Power and Social Theory **12**: 45-94.

Guarnizo, L. E. (2001). On the Political Participation of transnational Migrants: Old Practices and New Trends. E Pluribus Unum? Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation. G. Gerstle and J. Mollenkopf. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation**:** 213-263.

Gutiérrez, D. G. (1999). "Migration, Emergent Ethnicity, and the "Third Space": The Shifting Politics of Nationalism in Greater Mexico." The Journal of American History **86**(2): 481-517.

Guzmán, B. (2001). The Hispanic Population: Census 2000 Brief. Washington, DC, U.S. Census Bureau.

Hanson, R. (2003). Civic Culture and Urban Change: Governing Dallas. Detroit, Wayne State University Press.

Hartz, L. (1955). The Liberal Tradition in America. New York, Harcourt Brace & Company.
Hayes-Bautista, D. E. and M. Nicholges (2000). American Dream Makers: Latino Profiles Study Report. Los Angeles, United Way.
Hernández Gómez, C. (2001). Latino Leadership: Population Soars, but Political Power Lags. The Chicago Reporter. Chicago.
Hingham, J. (1966). Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism 1860-1925. New York, Atheneum.
Hirschman, A. O. (1970). Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline Firms, Organizations, and States. Cambridge, Harvard University Press.
Horowitz, D. (1985). Conflict and Accommodation, Mexican-Americans in the Cosmopolis. Mexican-Americans in Comparative Perspective. W. Connor. Washington D.C., Urban Institute Press**:** 58-103.
Hughes, S. (1993). Looking North for Support. El Financiero Internacional. Mexico**:** 12-13.
Huntington, S. P. (2004a). "The Hispanic Challenge." Foreign Affairs.
Huntington, S. P. (2004b). Who Are We : The Challenges to America's National Identity. New York, NY, Simon and Schuster.
ICEMC (2001). A New Deal for Mexican Migration?, International Center for Ethnicity, Migration and Citizenship.
IFE (1998). Informe Final de la Comisión de Especialistas que estudia las modalidades del Voto de los Mexicanos residentes en el Extranjero. Mexico, Instituto Federal Electoral.
Imagen (2004). Apoya Fundación Rockefeller a Clubes Zacatecanos en EU. Imagen. Zacatecas.
Ireland, p. (1994). The Policy Challenge of Ethnic Diversity, Immigrant Politics in France and Switzerland. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England, Harvard University Press.
Ireland, P. (2000). Reaping What They Sow: Institutions and Immigrant Political participation in Western Europe. Challenging Immigration and Ethnic relations Politics, Comparative European Perspectives. K. Ruud and P. Statham. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
Ireland, P. (2003). No Easy Fit: Immigrants and the Welfare State in Europe, Forthcoming.
Irizar, G. (2002). Impulsará PRI voto en el Extranjero. Reforma. Mexico City.
Itzigsohn, J. (2000). "Immigration and the Boundaries of Citizenship: The Institutions of Immigrants' Political Transnationalism." International Migration Review **34**(4): 1126-1154.
Itzigsohn, J., C. Dore Cabral, et al. (1999). "Mapping Dominican Transnationalism: Narrow and Broad Transnational Practices." Ethhnic and Racial Studies **22**(2): 316-339.
Jacobs, D., K. Phalet, et al. (2004). "Associational Membership and Political Involvement Among Ethnic Minority Groups in Brussels." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **30**(3): 543-560.
Jacobs, D. and J. Tillie (2004). "Introduction: Social Capital and Political Integration of Migrants." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **30**(3): 419-427.

Johnston, P. (2001). The Emergence of Transnational Citizenship among Mexican Immigrants in California. Citizenship Today: Global Perspectives and Practices. A. Aleinikoff and D. Klusmeyer. Washington DC, Carnegie Endowment for International Peacr**:** 253-277.

Jones-Correa, M. (1998a). Between Two Nations, the Political Predicament of Latinos In New York City. Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press.

Jones-Correa, M. (1998b). Between Two Nations. The Political Predicament of Latinos in New York City. New York, Cornell University Press.

Jones-Correa, M. (2002). Bringing Outsiders In: Questions of Immigrant Incorporation. Conference on the Politics of Democratic Inclusion, University of Notre Dame.

Judd, D. R. and P. Kantor (2006). American Urban Politics: The Reader, Longman.

Katia, H. (2004). Immigrants status stirs host of issues: Noncitizens persist in fight for rights, democratic voice. Chronicle. Los Angeles.

Kauffman, K. M. (2003). The Mayoral Politics of New York and Los Angeles. New York and Los Angeles Politics, Society and Culture: a Comparative View H. David. Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press**:** 314-340.

Kauffman, K. M. (2004). The Urban Voter: Group Conflict and Mayoral Voting Behavior in American Cities. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.

Kaufman, R. R. (1977). Mexico and Latin American Authoritarianism. Authoritarianisms in Mexico. J. L. Reyna and R. S. Winert. Philadelphia, Institute for the Study of Human Issues.

Kaufmann, K. M. (2004). The Urban Voter: Group Conflict and Mayoral Voting Behavior in American Cities. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.

Keiser, R. A. (2000). The Changing Structure of Minority Group Political Opportunities: Looking Ahead to the Twenty-first Century. Minority Politics at the Millennium. R. A. Keiser and K. Underwood. New York and London, Garland Publishing.

Kemp, K. A. and R. L. Lineberrry (1982). The Last of the Great Urban Machines and the Last of the Great Urban Mayors? Chicago Politics, 1955-77. After Daley, Chicago Politics in Transition. S. K. Gove and L. H. Masotti. Urbana, Chicago and London, University of Illinois Press**:** 1-26.

Koopmans, R. (2004). "Migrant Mobilisation and Political Opportunities: Variation Among German Cities and a Comparison with the United Kingdom and the Netherlands." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **30**(3): 449-470.

Koopmans, R. and P. Statham (2000a). Challenging the Liberal Nation-State? Postnationalism, Multiculturalism, and Ethnic Minorities in Britain and Germany. Challenging Immigration and Ethnic Relations Politics, Comparative European Perspectives. R. Koopmans and P. Statham. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Koopmans, R. and P. Statham (2000b). Migration and Ethnic Relations as a Field of Political Contention: An Opportunity Structure Approach. Challenging Immigration and Ethnic Relations Politics. R. Koopmans and P. Statham. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press.

Landolt, P., L. Autler, et al. (1999). "From Hermano Lejano to Hermano Mayor: the Dialectics of Salvadoran Transnationalism." Ethhnic and Racial Studies **22**(2): 290-315.

Larios, J. A. (2001). Diagnóstico del Programa de Comunidades Mexicanas en los Angeles. Los Angeles, Consulado General de Mexico.

Leiken, R. (2000). The Melting Border. Mexico and Mexican Communities in the United States (draft). Washington, DC, Center for Equal Opportunity.
Leiken, R. (2001). Immigration: The Go-Between for U.S.-Mexico Harmony Along the Border. Los Angeles Times.
Lenz, J. J. and A. Stephan (1996). Problems of democratic transition and consolidation : southern Europe, South America, and post-communist Europe. Baltimore, Md., Johns Hopkins University Press
Longoria, T. J. (2000). Context, Identity, and Incorporation: Are Latinos in the Midwest Different? Minority Politics at the Millennium. R. A. Keiser and K. Underwood. New York and London, Garland Publishing Inc.**:** 179-201.
Marshall, T. H. (1992). Citizenship and Social Class. Citizenship and Social Class. T. H. Marshall and T. Bottomore. London, Pluto Press**:** 1-49.
Martinez Saldaña, J. (2002). Participación Política Migrante: Praxis Cotidiana de Ciudadanos Excluidos. La Dimensión Política de la Migración Mexicana. L. Calderon Chelius and J. Martinez Saldaña. Mexico City, Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora.
Massey, D. S. (2005). Testimony of Douglas S. Massey. Washington, DC, Senate Judiciary Committee.
McAdam, D. (1999). Political process and the development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. Chicago, Chicago University Press.
McAdam, D., S. Tarrow, et al. (2001). Dynamics of Contention. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
McCarron, J. (2003). The Hispanic Power Surge. Crain's.
Medrano, L. (2005). Mexican expatriates' vote: How powerful? . ARIZONA DAILY STAR.
Merton, R. K. (1957). Social Theory and Social Structure. New York, NY Free Press
Meyerson, H. (2001). The Era of Bad Feelings: Jim Hahn Sets a City Against Itself and Comes Out on Top LAweekly. **June 8-14**.
Milkman, R. and K. Wong (2001). Organizing Immigrant Workers: Case Studies from Southern California. Rekindling the Movement: Labor's Quest for Relevance in the 21st Century L. Turner, H. Katz and R. Hurd. Ithaca, Cornell University Press**:** 99-128.
Moctezuma Longoria, M. (1999). Redes Sociales, Comunidades Filiales, Familias Y Clubes De Migrantes. El Circuito Nigrante Sain Alto, Zac.-Oakland, Ca. Zacatecas, Universidad of Zacatecas.
Moctezuma Longoria, M. (2003). Territorialidad Socio-Cultural y Política de los Clubes de Zacatecanos en Estados Unidos. Zacatecas, Mexico.
Moctezuma Longoria, M. (In press). Conversión en Servicios e Infraestructura Comunitaria Impulsados por los Migrantes y el Gobierno de Zacatecas. Zacatecas, Universidad of Zacatecas.
Moctezuma Longoria, M. and H. Rodriguez Ramírez (2000). Programas "Tres por Uno" y "Mi Comunidad": Evaluación con Migrantes Zacatecanos y Guanajuatenses Radicados en Chicago, IL y Los Angeles, CA. Zacatecas, Universidad of Zacatecas.
Mollenkopf, J. (1999). Urban Political Conflicts and Alliances: New York and Los Angeles Compared. The Handbook of International Migration: The American

Experience. C. Hirschman, P. Kasinitz and J. DeWind. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation.
Mollenkopf, J., D. Olson, et al. (2001). Immigrant Political Participation in New York and Los Angeles. Governing American Cities: Interethnic Coalitions, Competition and Conflict. M. Jones-Correa. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation.
Morawska, E. (2001). Immigrants, Transnationalism, and Ethnicization: A Comparison of This Great Wave and the Last. E Pluribus Unum? Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation. G. Gerstle and J. Mollenkopf. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.
Morgan, R. (2004). Governance by Decree: The Impact of the Voting Rights Act in Dallas Lawrence: Kansas, University Press of Kansas.
Myrdal, G. (1964). An American Dilemma. New York, McGraw-Hill.
New York City Department of City Planning , P. D. (2004). The Newest New Yorkers, 2000: Immigrant New York in the New Millennium, Briefing Booklet. New York City.
NYT (2004). A Vital Immigration Debate. The New York Times**:** 32 A.
Ochoa, J. O. (2002). Pide PRI Dictamen para que Mexicanos Voten en el Extranjero. El Universal. Mexico City.
Ochoa, J. O. (2003). Buscará CEN voto de Mexicanos en EU. El Universal. Mexico City.
Odmalm, P. (2004). "Civil Society, Migrant organizations and Political Parties: Theoretical Linkages and Applications to the Swedish Context." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **30**(3): 471-490.
Ogelman, N. (2003). "Documenting and Explaining the Persistence of Homeland politics Among Germany's Turks." International Migration Review **37**(1): 163-193.
Padilla, F. M. (1985). Latino Ethnic Consciousness: The Case of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago. Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press.
Paral, R., T. Ready, et al. (2004). "Latino Demographic Growth in Metropolitan Chicago." Research Reports **2004.2**.
Parrillo, V. N. (2005). Diversity in America. Thousand Oaks, London and New Delhi, Pine Forge Press.
Passel, J. S. (2005). Estimates of the Size and Characteristics of the Undocumented Population, Pew Hispanic Center.
Passel, J. S. (2006). The Size and Characteristics of the Unauthorized Migrant Population in the U.S., Pew Hispanic Center.
Perea, J. (1996). Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States. New York, New York University Press.
Plascencia, L. F. B., G. P. Freeman, et al. (2003). "The Decline of Barriers to Immigrant Economic and Political Rights in American States, 1977-2001." International Migration Review **37**(1): 5-23.
Plotke, D. (1999). Immigration and Political Incorporation in the Contemporary United States. The Handbook of International Migration: The American Experience. C. Hirschman, P. Kasinitz and J. De Wind. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation**:** 294-318.
Porter, E. (2001). A Surging Mexican Population Creates New Rifts, Rivalries for Hispanic Groups. The Wall Street Journal.

Portes, A. (1997a). "Globalization from Below: The Rise of Transnational Communities." ESRC Transnational Communities Programme Working Paper **1**.

Portes, A. (1997b). Globalization from Below: The Rise of Transnational Communities. Princeton, Princeton University.

Portes, A., L. E. Guarnizo, et al. (2002). "Transnational Entrepreneurs: An Alternative Form of Immigrant Economic Adaptation." American Sociological Review **67**(April): 278-298.

Portes, A., L. E. Guarnizo, et al. (1999). "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field." Ethnic and Racial Studies **22**(2): 217-237.

Portes, A. and M. Zhou (1993). ""The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants Among Post-1965 Immigrant Youth." Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science **530**: 74-96.

Presidencia (2004). Iniciativa con Proyecto de Decreto que Reforma y AdicionaDiversos Artículos del Código Federal de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales para Hacer Efectivo el Derecho al Voto de los Ciudadanos Mexicanos que se Encuentran en el Extranjero.

Preston, J. (2006). Rules Collide With Reality In the Immigration Debate. The New York Times**:** A11.

Raza, N. C. o. L. (2002). Mobilizing the Vote: Latinos and Immigrants in the 2002 Midterm Election, National Council of La Raza.

Renshon, S. (2001). "Dual Citizenship and American National Identity."

Reyna, J. L. (1977). Redefining the authoritarian regime. Authoritarianism in Mexico. J. L. Reyna and R. S. Winert. Philadelphia, Institute for the Study of Human Issues**:** 129-151.

Rivera Salgado, G. and L. Escala Rabada (2002). Collective Identity and Organizational Strategies among Indigenous and Mestizo Mexican Migrants. Indigenous Mexican Migrants in the US: Building Bridges between Researchers and Community Leaders, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Roberts, B., Frank, Reanne, and Lozano-Ascencio, Fernando (1999). "Transnational Migrant Communities and Mexican migration to the US." Ethnic and Racial Studies **22**(2): 239-266.

Rodriguez, G. (2004). Mexican Americans and the Mestizo Melting Pot. Reinventing the Melting Pot. T. Jacoby. New York, Basic Books**:** 125-137.

Rosenhek, Z. (1999). "The politics of claims-making by labor migrants in Israel." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **25**(4): 575-595.

Ross Pineda, R. (2000). Derechos Políticos en el Extranjero: Balance y Perspectivas ante el Nuevo Gobierno Mexicano. Chicago**:** 48.

Samuelson, R. J. (2000). America's as Mexico's Economic Safety Valve. The Washington Post. Washington D.C.**:** A25.

Sanchez, A. and A. M. Weiss-Armush (2003). Study of North Texas Immigrant Communities Dallas, Texas, Dallas International**:** 73.

Sánchez, G. J. (1998). Face the Nation: Race, Immigration, and the Rise of Nativism in Late Twentieth-Century America. The Handbook of International Migration. A. O. Hirschman, P. Kasinitz and J. DeWind. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation.

Santamaría Gómez, A. (2001). Mexicanos en Estados Unidos: la nación, la política y el voto sin fronteras. Mexicanos en Estados Unidos: la nación, la política y el voto sin fronteras. S. G. Arturo. Mexico City, Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa and Partido de la Revolución Democrática**:** 13-191.

Scott, R. (1964). Mexican Government in Transition. Urbana, University of Illinois.

Shain, Y. (1999). Marketing the American Creed Abroad: Diasporas in the U.S. and their Homelands. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Silva-Herzog Márquez, J. (1998). Voto a distancia. Reforma. México City**:** 22A.

Silver, S. and J. Authers (2004). Migrants make their mark in Mexico poll. Financial Times**:** 2.

Smith, J. F. (2000). Fox Embraces Mexicans Living in U.S., Moves Toward Improving Ties. Los Angeles Times. Los Angeles.

Smith, M. P. and L. E. Guarnizo (1998a). The Locations of Trasnationalism. New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction Publishers.

Smith, M. P. and L. E. Guarnizo, Eds. (1998b). Transnationalism from Below. New Brusnwick, NJ, Transaction Publishers.

Smith, M. P. and L. E. Guranizo (1998). The Locations of Trasnationalism. New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction Publishers.

Smith, P. H. (1979). Labyrinths of Power. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Smith, R. (1996a). Mexicans in New York: Membership and Incorporation in a New Immigrant Community. G. Haslip-Viera.

Smith, R. (1997a). Transnational Migration, Assimilation, and Political Community. The City and the World. M. Crahan and A. Vourvoulias-Bush. New York, Council on Foreign Relations Press**:** 110-132.

Smith, R. (1998a). Reflections on Migration, the State and the Construction, Durability and Newness of Transitional Life. Soziale Welt. L. Pries. Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlagdgesellschaft**:** 197-217.

Smith, R. (1998b). Transnational Localities: Community, Technology and Politics of Membership within the Context of Mexico and U.S. Migration. Trasnationalism from Below. M. P. Smith, and Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo. New Brunswick, New Jersey, Transaction Publishers. **6:** 196-231.

Smith, R. (1999a). Migrant Membership as an Instituted Process: Tran nationalization, the State and the Extra-Territorial Conduct of Mexican Politics. American Sociological Association Meeting.

Smith, R. (1999b). The Transnational Practice of Migrant Politics and Membership: An Analysis of the Mexican Case with Some Comparative and Practical Reflections. Impacto de la Migración y las Remesas en el Crecimiento Económico Regional. Mexico, Senado de la Republica**:** 235-251.

Smith, R. (2002). "Al Este de Aztlán: la Migración Mexicana al Este de los Estados Unidos." Letras Libres Interactivas.

Smith, R. C. (1996b). Mexicans in New York: Memberships and Incorporation in a New Immigrant Community. Latinos in New York: Communities in Transition. G. Haslip-Viera and S. L. Baver. Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press**:** 57-103.

Smith, R. C. (2003). "Migrant Membership as an Instituted Process: Trasnationalization, the State and the Extra-Territorial Conduct of Mexican Politics." International Migration Review **37**(2): 297-343.

Smith, R. C., H. R. C. Guzman, et al. (2001). Introduction: Migration, Transnationalization, and Ethnic and Racial Dynamics in a Changing New York. Migration, Transnationalization & Race in a Changing New York. H. R. C. Guzman, R. C. Smith and R. Grosfoguel. Philadelphia, Temple University Press**:** 1-34.

Smith, R. M. (1997b). Civic Ideals, Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History. New Haven and London, Yale University Press.

Solís, J. (2001). Immigration Status and Identity: Undocumented Mexicans in New York. Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York. L.-M. Agustín and A. Dávila. New York, Columbia University Press**:** 337-362.

Sonenshein, R. (1990). Biracial Coalition Politics in Los Angeles. Racial Politics in American Cities. R. P. Browning, D. R. Marshall and D. H. Tabb. New York and London, Longman**:** 33-48.

Sonenshein, R. (2004). The city at stake: secession, reform, and the battle for Los Angeles. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Sonenshein, R. and P. Susan (2002). "The Dynamics of Latino Political Incorporation: the 2001 Los Angeles Mayoral Election as Seen in *Los Angeles Times* Exit Polls." PSOline **www.apsanet.org**.

Soysal, Y. N. (1994). Limits of Citizenship, Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.

Starks, R. T. and M. M. Preston (1990). Harold Washington and the Politics of Reform in Chicago: 1983-1987. Racial Politics in American Cities. R. P. Browning, D. R. Marshall and D. H. Tabb. New York and London, Longman**:** 88-107.

Sterne, E. S. (2001). Beyond the Boos: Immigration and American Political Culture from 1880 to 1940. E Pluribus Unum? Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation. G. Gerstle and J. Mollenkopf. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation**:** 33-66.

Suárez-Orozco, M. (2004). "Huntington and Hispanics, Letter to the Editor." Foreign Policy **May/June**.

Takaki, R. (1990). Iron Cages: Race and Culture in Nineteenth-Century America. New York, Oxford University Press.

Tarrow, S. (1988). "National Politics and Collective Action: Recent Theory and Research in Western Europe and the United States." Annual Review of Sociology **14**: 421-40.

Tarrow, S. (1994). Power in movement. Social movements, collective action and politics. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, P. S. (1932). Mexican Labor in the United States: Chicago and Calumet Region. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Tichenor, D. J. (2002). Dividing Lines, The Politics of Immigration Control in America. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Tillie, J. (2004). "Social Capital of Organisations and Their Members: Explaining the Political Integration of Immigrants in Amsterdam." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **30**(3): 529-542.

Togeby, L. (2004). "It Depends... How Organisational Participation Affects Political Participation and Social Trust Among Second-Generation Immigrants in Denmark." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies **30**(3): 509-528.
Trichter, J. and C. Paige (2005). New York City Mayoral Election Study. New York, Pace University.
Tucker, W. (1957). The Mexican Government Today. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.
Ueda, R. (2001). Historical Patterns of Immigrant Status and Incorporation in the United States. E Pluribus Unum? G. Gerstle and J. Mollenkopf. New York, The Rusell Sage Foundation**:** 291-330.
UIC. (2006). "Pilsen." from http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/gci/uicni/partnerships/pilsen.htm.
Unger, K., Verduzco, Gustavo (2000). El Desarrollo de las Regiones de Origen de los Migrantes: Experiencias y Perspectivas. Comisión Nacional de Migración, Mexico City, Mexico.
Uresti, J. (2004). ""Political Party, Deconstruction and the Latino Boom." Capitol Update.
USCIR (1997). Becoming an American: Immigration and Immigrant Policy. Washington D.C., U. S. Commission on Immigration Reform.
USDHS (2004). Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2004. Washington, DC, US Department of Homeland Security.
Valadéz, D. (1999). Implicaciones Constitucionales del Voto de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero. Viabilidad del Voto de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero, Memoria de los foros de Tijuana, Baja California, y Xalapa-Enríquez, Veracruz. México, Senado de la República**:** 93-102.
Velazquez de León, M. (2001). De Puebla a Nueva York. Reforma. Mexico City.
Vernon, R. (1963). The Dilemma of Mexico's Development. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press.
Waldinger, R. (2004). The 21st century: an entirely new story Reinventing the Melting Pot. T. Jacoby. New York, Basic Books.
Waldinger, R. and M. Bozorgmehr (1996). The Making of a Multicultural Metropolis. Ethnic Los Angeles. R. Waldinger and M. Bozorgmehr. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation**:** 3-35.
Zabin, C. and L. Escala Rabada (1998). Mexican Hometown Associations and Mexican Immigrant Political Empowerment in Los Angeles. Washington D.C, The Aspen Institute**:** 1-41.
Zárate, A. (2004). "Asegunes del Voto en el Extranjero." Lectura Política, Suplement from Carta de Política Mexicana **VI**(249).
Zolberg, A. (1999). Matters of State: Theorizing Immigration Policy. The Handbook of International Migration: The American Experience. C. Hirschman, P. Kasinitz and J. DeWind. New York, Rusell Sage Foundation**:** 71-93.
Zuniga, V. and H.L. Rubén (2002). Rusell Sage Foundation.

Vita

Miryam Hazan was born in Mexico City, Mexico on April 16th, 1970. Her parents are Jacobo Hazán Levy and Luisa Béjar Algazi. In Mexico City she attended Colegio Hebreo Sefaradí. In 1994 she was awarded her B.A. with a major in Journalism and Mass Communications from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. In 1998 she got a Masters' Degree in Latin American Studies from Georgetown University in Washington D.C; and in the Summer of 2006 she was awarded her PhD in Government from the University of Texas at Austin. Miryam worked as a Journalist in Mexico City for six years were she published in the political and financial sections. She also was a collaborator for Expansión Magazine. She was a research Assitant for the Public Policy Clinic at the University of Texas at Austin from 1999 to 2002. Miryam published a chapter in the book *Sucesión Pactada: la Ingeniería Politica del Salinsmo.* She also published a manuscript on Mexican elites in the International Review of Sociology and is a co-author with Rodolfo de la Garza of a report published by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute. Miryam lives in New Jersey with her husband and two sons.

Permanent address: 14 Riverbend Dr., North Brunswick, NJ 08902

This dissertation was typed by the author.